



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL



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



DOWNSEND TIMES

13 December 2019



A Message from the Headmaster

Whichever political party you pinned your colours to last night, I suspect that you are relieved that the talk of General Elections is over, as is the threat of 20% increases to independent school fees! So, we can now look forward to the future, much as is often the theme at Downsend. I hope that our politicians will be as committed to delivering on their promises as we are at Downsend. In January 2019 we promised to completing the refurbishments in the Lower and Upper Schools; to developing the STEAM and Future Skills philosophy behind our education; to appointing great new teachers; and to continuing to support our families

whatever their Downsend journeys look like. I hope you will agree that we have stuck to those promises, and that we continue to Inspire the brilliant Young Minds that we are blessed to look after.

It has been a fantastic year, full of success inside and outside the classroom. Most importantly, it has been a happy year and I thank you for all your support in ensuring that our pupils are cheerful and driven in equal measure. The past fortnight has seen a host of Christmas nativities, concerts and productions, all designed to get us into the Christmas spirit. I hope that this Christmas is a wonderful one for you and your families, and that the New Year is full of exciting opportunities and promises kept. I look forward to welcoming you all back on January 7!

Ian Thorpe

Lower School Update

It has been a busy and eventful term with the children in the Lower School achieving so very much across everything they have done be it academic, artist, musical, sporting or pastoral. They have shone in their work, their friendships and their achievements and it has been wonderful to see their pride in themselves. Trackit Lights has pinged endlessly with all of the house points being added on! Well done to everyone.



Year 5 excelled this week in their carol service at St George's Church, Ashted and entertained us all through their depiction of the Christmas story with wonderful drama, singing, instrumental playing, shadow puppetry and rapping - a first for me in church! Well done to all the Year 5 children and staff for their hard work with this lovely performance. Well done too to Year 4 who surprised our wonderful catering team with a 'flash mob' of 'The Wonders of Christmas' from their nativity 'Hay Presto' as a thank you for all of their hard work and care in the kitchen over the term. Despite disturbing their preparation for Christmas Lunch – which was typically delicious – I know that all of the team enjoyed the music and the surprise!

Despite it being the final week of term, the academic side of school life has continued in earnest this week and I have seen fantastic writing from Myles H and Grace A in 3CC which showed super understanding of the language needed to tell an inspiring story. Please keep up the reading over the holidays so that next term can start with a similar bang that this one has ended with!

With Father Christmas on everyone's minds, the Lower School had their 'Santa Dash' on Monday. The children enjoyed Christmas games, hot chocolate and singing all to raise money for our school charity. On that note, I would like to thank all of our families for their support of all of our events this term and a particular thanks to our DPA whose unfailing support of the school is so appreciated – they must all be on the 'Nice List' for sure!

Today we welcome back to the school Mrs Newberry and Mrs Sutton both of whom have been on maternity leave. They have already spent lots of time this week with 4JN who I know are pleased to have them back. Thank you to Mr Skates who takes up his new role at Moon Hall School in January. We are very grateful to him for all that he has contributed during his time at Downsend and wish him the very best of luck.

So, after Father Christmas' visit today we are finally ready to head off for Christmas adventures and lots of fun. On behalf of my team and me, thank you so much for all of your generous Christmas gifts and your unfailing support over this busy term. I hope that you all have a very happy Christmas.

Clare Kirkham, Head of Lower School

Upper School Update

This week has been an absolute joy in the Upper School! This morning form time was full of Secret Santa presents and Christmas cards, and during all of the festive fun this week the children have been happy and cheerful, and lessons have been full of activities such as Christmas 'code cracking' challenges, festive circuit board building and seasonal brainteasers. On Thursday we had our traditional Christmas lunch and Doug and his team cooked a fabulous selection of food, including Celestine's delicious vegetable Wellington. Thanks to the whole catering team for all your hard work and support this year at lunchtimes, breakfast clubs, parents' evenings, after school refreshments and match teas!

Despite the festive frivolities this has been an action-packed week. Some of our keen mathematicians found time for the Maths Challenge activities, set by Mrs Stack, and a special well done to Alexa EM, Erika S, Toby G, Alex T, Jacob G, Safa A, Kiera F, Toby H, Alex C and Jack B on being the top performers in this competition. I know the children enjoyed their reward of a hot chocolate with the Headmaster to celebrate, so well done again on fantastic numeracy skills! In addition, the following children have achieved their next Headmaster's commendations for a combination of academic progress and good citizenship:- In year 6;

Polly GG, Reuben B, Lucas T, Sadie T, Freya BW, Lily B, Alex C, Toby D, Ned S, Alex B, Reggie A, Zac S, Lana B and Hugo F; in Year 7 Alex T, Jayden K, Leo L and Issy B and in Year 8; Aniyah G, Damla S, Alexa EM, Joel W, Natasha C, Oliver F, Gracie N, Amelie M, Harry M, Jude G, Oliver P, Daniel R, Kelly N, Jasmine C, Elizabeth H, Jacob S and Rhianna P.

Also, following a highly successful sporting term congratulations to the following pupils who were awarded sports colours by Mr Lawrence and Miss Sievewright today:-

Hockey Half Colours:- Rhianna P, Damla S, Bijou C-S, Issy B. Hockey Full Colours; Elizabeth H, Chloe M, Natasha C, Geraldine H, Josie D, Jada J and Gracie N. In Swimming, Half colours were awarded to:- Elizabeth H, Evie S, Tigi H-J, Thomas U.

Full colours were awarded to Noah B-W. In Football, half colours were awarded to:- Alex T, Teddy G, Louis K, Jayden K, Luca C-S, Ralphie A, Harrison G-S, Jack L, Jack M, Harry McD, George V, Oliver F and Marshall D.

On Monday the U.13 girls played brilliantly in the Surrey Hockey competition to finish 3rd overall, which is a tremendous achievement, so well done to them, Miss Ceci and Mrs Fitch! On Wednesday the Year 7 & 8 House swimming gala produced some amazing races, with Noah BW breaking the school record for the Individual Medley, a fantastic achievement, with Headley being the overall champions! I must also mention two very special girls in Year 6, Martha G and Lana B, who organised a sponsored netball competition last Thursday night, completely independently of teacher support, which was both great fun and raised over £100.00 for our school charity 'Love me love my Mind'! That was amazing girls, very well done! This has also been a brilliant term for Drama and in our final Upper School assembly the Year 8 pupils gave a lovely performance of 'The Story of Buddy' (the Elf!) following which Mr Bryant awarded Bronze Drama colours to:- Anita B, Arthur C, Jasmine C, Magnus F, Cillian G, Tigi H-J, Sam M, Kelly N, Gracie N and Oliver P. Silver colours were awarded to:- Roman A, Noah B-W, Josie D, Alexa EM, Alice G, Marcus H, Michelle M and George V. Finally, special congratulations go to the following children for being awarded their gold Drama colours:- Bijou C-S, Daniel R, Harry H, Jacob S and Thomas U (in recognition of the fact they have participated in at least 3 Drama productions in Years 6,7&8).

I must also take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs Allison, Mrs Hawes, Mrs Dinnage, Mr Skitt and the Upper School Choirs and Orchestras on a wonderful Christmas Carol Concert, which took place on Thursday. The quality of the musical performances was simply outstanding and this event really set us all up for the Christmas holidays. Thank you also to all those parents who attended to support the event; the pupils were so pleased to have you there and I know enjoyed performing for you enormously. Can I also thank the DPA for their help and generosity this morning at our Upper School Santa Dash event, where they kindly served Hot Chocolates and Biscuits following the pupils' exertions! This is just one example of the hard work and creativity the DPA have demonstrated this year so can I say a huge thank you to Louise, Leanne, Alex, Laura, Lynn, Nicola and Charlotte, along with all of the parents who have assisted the DPAS events for your incredible efforts this year!

Finally, can I wish all of our Upper School pupils and families and very Merry Christmas and all the very best of luck for 2020! We look forwards to seeing you all back at school on January 7th after a wonderful Christmas break!

Karl Newland, Head of Upper School

Year 4 Surprise Song for Catering Staff



Year 4 enjoyed singing a song from their Christmas production 'Hey Presto' yesterday, to say a huge thank you to the all of the catering staff at Downsend. The children and staff are truly lucky to have such brilliant a brilliant team, providing wonderful meals everyday, including a wonderful Christmas dinner yesterday!

Lower School Santa Dash



On Monday, the Lower School had great fun taking part in the annual Santa Dash. The school was brightened up with Christmas jumpers, antlers and Santa hats, and the children enjoyed running around the astro with their friends, doing Santa Bootcamp aerobics and taking part in Christmas present relays. During the morning, the children also took part in an enthusiastic Christmas sing-a-long with Mrs Temlett and made Christmas decorations to take home.

A huge thank you to the DPA for supporting this event with their donations of refreshments and craft materials and to all the parent volunteers who helped served the hot chocolate in the Pavilion. Over £600 was raised for our school charity, Love Me, Love My Mind.

Natasha Ludlam

Carols By Candlelight Year 5



The Year 5 Carols by Candlelight was opened by the instrumentalist's rendition of Walking in The Air and was followed by scenes from the nativity enacted by each Year 5 class. The intimate setting of St George's

Church, Ashtead, coupled with a packed and warm congregation, set the mood for a perfect evening.

The children confidently performed their scenes and rejoiced in singing Christmas songs and carols. Not only did the evening evoke a festive feeling, but it showcased the breadth of talent in the year group for public speaking, singing and making Music.

Our thanks go to St George's Church, Ashtead for hosting this event and making us warmly welcome.

Caroline Driscoll, Head of Year 5

Autumn Term Upper School Achievements

Congratulations to our top achievers this term from each form group: 7FF – Alex T, 7CM – Izzy B, 7JA – Hassaan and 7BD – Rhys.

Congratulations to the following Year 7 pupils who have achieved their first Headmaster's Commendation: Ryan, Vinny, Darius, Alex T, Hassaan, Rhys, Jasmine, Lily, Louis, Izzy B and Tendo.

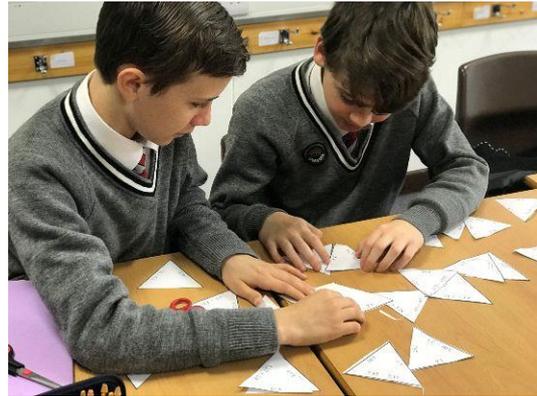
Thank you to our first group of Ambassadors for doing a great job this term: Holly, Joe, Arya, Olivia B, Lisa, Aimee and Kierra.



Not everyone was available for the photographs!

Maths Update





It's been a busy half term in the Mathematics Department in Downsend! Students have enjoyed lovely Mathematics team work challenges including Tarsia puzzles which are designed to provoke mathematical discussion and reasoning skills.

We have also had all the Year 8's working in teams in the Tregenna Hall as Mrs Mercer led the session to explain a fun Maths End of term Activity called the Pirate Game. Its a game of logic, problem solving and strategy and lots of fun was had by all!



Maths Christmas Challenge





Students in the Upper School took part in a Maths Christmas Challenge which involved actively working on their Maths using Hegarty Maths at home. The results were quite amazing, with students spending hours and hours actively answering questions.

In just one week, there were 218 hours actively spent working on Mathematics questions and 4379 MemRi questions answered correctly in the Upper School. This figure is not including all the task questions that were also done! A massive well done to all those who took part!! The most successful students from each year group were invited to have hot chocolate and biscuits with Mr Thorpe.

A big Well Done to all students who successfully completed the three tasks and a special congratulations to the following students:

Year 6:

Erika Simpson

Alex Carmody

Toby Hopkinson

Keira Furze

Year 7

Alexander Thorning:

Jack Burger

Jacob Grude

Year 8

Toby Graham

Alexa Esteves Murfin

Safa Ahmed

The children were delighted with their treat yesterday of hot chocolate complete with squirty cream and marshmallows, along with cupcakes and Christmas gingerbread, which they enjoyed with Mr Thorpe in his study. We will be running a similar challenge every half term to further encourage students to revise and practise their Mathematics.

Laura Stack, Head of Mathematics

Languages Department Update

It has been a busy and exciting term in the Languages department. We have introduced a new Scheme of Work in all year groups, with a focus on building core skills throughout the whole school. In the Upper School, the children have benefited from new textbooks and the accompanying interactive resources and have responded really well to these. Year 6 now have the option to learn German and those who have chosen this have made a really good start to their second language, as have those who have chosen Spanish. We are also very excited about our GCSE offer, about which more information will be available next term for our Year 8 pupils.

Mrs Taylor, Mrs Hallam, Mrs Houlden and I have been really impressed by the hard work, engagement and energy shown by the pupils this term, which has made our job in selecting our Linguists of the Term all the harder. We have, however, chosen two pupils in each class as Linguists of the Term. One has been selected for their attainment and the other for their effort or progress through the term. We have awarded Commendations (Upper School) or Super Star Awards (Lower School), both worth 10 house points to all of the other children who were in the running for these awards.

Linguists of the Term for the Autumn Term 2019 are:

Year 2: Rebecca L and Thomas A (2CC), Amy J and Rupert P (2CW), Cem E and Floor R (2SB), Jack J-H and Summer K (2YdV)

Year 3: Charlie R and Myles H (3CC), Alaina M and Beste D (3NL), Francesca B and Olivia D (3ST), Austin W and Freddie C (3VB)

Year 4: Annabel E and Issy E (4EF), Jessica R and Oliver S (4JS), Harriet H and Sam R (4MP), Emma C and Finlay M (4RD)

Year 5: Lauren M and Sophie M (5AG), Bella T, Maria B and Oscar L (5CD), Archie D and Katie C (5LC), Kian B and Miranda S (5PM)

Year 6 French: Lily B, Alexander B, Reuben B, Amelie P, Sienna R, Oscar R, Sadie T, Lucy W

Year 6 German: Polly G G, Hugo F, Thomas M, Sophia V

Year 6 Spanish: Reggie A, Freya B, Seb B, Grace C, Toby H, Theo J-M, Zac S, Aizere Z

Year 7 French: Hassaan A, Joseph C, Monty H, Jack M, Lisa N-J, Lily P, Jasmine R, Alexander T

Year 7 Spanish: Lola B, Darius G-P, Rhys H, Aimee J, Jada J, Jayden K, Arya K, Vinne M

Year 8 French: Noah B-W, Jasmine C, Oliver F, Alice G, Teddy G, Kelly N, Gracie N, Daniel R, Joel W

Year 8 Spanish: Safa A, Anita B, Aniyah G, Harry H, Emerson N, Jacob S, Alexander T, Thomas U

We look forward to lots of continued good progress next term, and in the week beginning 24th February, we will be marking International Mother Tongue Day as the theme for our Languages week. Next term, Mrs Houlden has decided to reduce her teaching commitments at Downsends, and we are therefore pleased to welcome back Mrs Gregory, who will be teaching Spanish to 7X, 7Y and 7Z on a Thursday and Friday afternoon until the end of the year. As many of you will know, Mrs Gregory brings a wealth of experience from her many years teaching at Downsends, knows the children well and has already

been working closely with Mrs Houlden to ensure continuity for the children in these classes.

Martin Skitt, Head of Languages

Head Girl and Head Boy Visit the Children's Trust in Tadworth



On Thursday 28 November I was lucky enough to accompany Chloe. M and Marcus. H to the Children's Trust in Tadworth. I could not have been more proud of our Head Boy and Head Girl for their maturity whilst being shown around the impressive site; interacting with the amazing adults that work there and the inspirational children that are being cared for. The work that goes on at the Children's Trust is phenomenal and although a little upsetting, it is heart warming to know that all the good work with our fund raising, this year and last goes to such a worthy cause. The CEO personally thanked all the Downsend Community for their amazing support – well done to everyone! I wish you all a wonderful Christmas; whilst we enjoy this special time with our families, lets continue to remember those less fortunate than ourselves.

Merry Christmas

Mr Albert

On Thursday 28th November Marcus and I went to the Children's Trust where we were educated on how it works, had a tour of the impressive 24 acres and met some of the children who are receiving expert care from the volunteers and workers.

The overwhelming impression was that of positivity and hope. The Children's Trust offers support and recuperation for children with brain damage and head injuries. One of the children we met was an eight year old girl who had suffered a head injury. I had anticipated the day to be really upsetting, but the part that upset me was because she is the same age as my sister and it then struck me that this could happen to any one of us. We shouldn't take things such as our eye site, hearing or even the most simple tasks as talking for granted. All it takes if for someone to not wear a helmet when they go biking or not looking when you cross the road. It is so sad that this could happen to anyone so just be cautious. Although it must me a sad job to do they all had happy attitudes.

There were many amazing machines to help support the children such and a button that was beside her head and when she hit it, the toy that was attached talked. Another was a music machine that had two microphones, lost of buttons which changed the pitch, volume etc and two balls which vibrated for all the children who are deaf. Last year The Children's Trust was our main charity abut this year our music and drama funds go there, I hope we will be able to buy or contribute to an amazing music machine like the ones we saw.

The trust was so inspirational, not just to the family and friends of the injured loved ones but also to me and others. The work that they do there is exceptional and I think everyone should support this charity.

Chloe Monk (Head Girl)

My trip to The Children's Trust

On Thursday 28 November I went to the Tadworth Children's Trust. As soon as we arrived we watched a PowerPoint on what the Children's Trust do to help children with brain injury and where their money goes. We began by going on a tour to see a part of their 24 acres of land, where they have a hospital, school and accommodation for staff and families. Towards the end of the tour, we marvelled at the 2nd largest free standing tree house in the UK, with a long winding ramp for the children to access in their wheelchairs. After this we went to a classroom to see some children, and just how incredible the work is. I saw a little girl (8 years old) she had been there for a couple of months and her wheel chair was fitted with a fascinating mechanism. It was designed so that when

she turned her head a teddy would start to dance, her face was so happy it warmed my heart. Next in the same classroom we played with hand bells to a tune from a YouTube video, which all the children really enjoyed, before finally being shown a very expensive piece of kit. It was a music machine specifically designed for the children, so that when you made sounds the noises could be adjusted and the two large balls would light up and vibrate. Again the children were so engaged by these, it was great to know they were so happy playing with all the sensory equipment. After this we left the children and met the CEO of the charity who thanked all of Downsend for the money they raised last year. It was so amazing seeing the fantastic charity that is the Children's Trust.

Marcus Herholdt

Music News

Musical Celebrations for Talented Siblings

Hot on the heels of successfully auditioning for the Benedetti Orchestra 2020 Horatio M came second in the intermediate violin at Woking Music Festival recently and won the intermediate brass category.

Octavia won the intermediate woodwind and U12 recorder classes.

Following this, In the Sutton Music Festival, Horatio again managed to win the intermediate Brass, whilst Octavia won the U16 jazz, U10 woodwind and U10 recorder classes.

Fantastic achievements - Congratulations to you both!

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

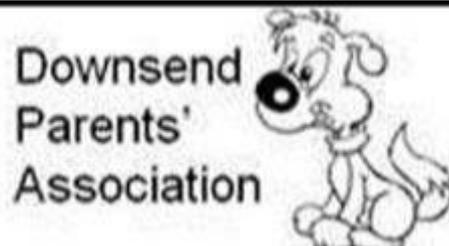
We have tutors for the following instruments:

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



It's that most wonderful time of the year.... Bring on 2020!



It's Christmas and the DPA are looking forward to putting all thoughts of jolly bags and grottos behind us, hanging up our elf ears and kicking back to enjoy some wonderful, relaxing time with our loved ones.

At this time of year, it's important to stop and reflect on the experiences we gained, be thankful for all those people we met, opportunities we enjoyed and look forward to another productive year. This year, inspired by our community, the DPA have been able to deliver a series of innovative, thoughtful and engaging events, and also provide funding for a number of brilliant activities or pieces of equipment that continue to enrich the school experience for our children. In the first half of 2019, we were also able to pull together as a community and raise significant funds for worthy charities including The Children's Trust, Action for A-T and the British Heart Foundation! We have loved the opportunity of getting creative, meeting new people and bringing you some new events like the Colour Run and the Downsend Festival, as well as refreshing some of our firm favourites such as the Christmas Fair.

The DPA Committee would like to say a heartfelt thank you to every single parent, child and staff member who took time to volunteer, donate or attend our DPA activities this year, we are grateful for both your time and unwavering support!

As we look forward to what 2020 has in store, we thought you might value a summary of the key DPA event dates so you have them top of your mind:

Date	Event
Tuesday 21 January	Pre loved Uniform Sale
Friday 28 February	Quiz Night
Friday 20 March	Lower School Mother's Day afternoon tea
Saturday 20 June	Downsend Summer Ball

We look forward to seeing you all in 2020, and in the meantime we wish you all sincere Season's Greetings!

Warm wishes

The DPA Committee

INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS

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