



**DOWNSEND**  
SCHOOL



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

# DOWNSEND TIMES

**17 January 2020**



## **A Message from the Headmaster**

I have been struck by the huge sense of innovation and partnership that characterises our school this week. Innovation, not only in the form of the Arts Centre Project, which started this week, but also demonstrated in such abundance by pupils and staff. I have had delegations from pupils discussing how we can support

those affected by the devastating bush fires in Australia or create T-shirts to help the school charity. I have worked with staff who are eager to develop the ways in which we track pupil performance in their department, or take on new roles of responsibility in our changing school. At the same time, we have received universal support from parents in lobbying the Council to finally resolve the issue of the lake that appears outside our school during heavy rainfall. You will be pleased to know that our collective voices have been heard and it appears that this problem will finally be resolved next month. Those Y3 pupils and staff who have moved into Howard House to escape the noise of the contractors appear to have treated this adventure as a bear hunt and appear blissfully happy in their new surroundings. The ability to adapt and be flexible, to think critically and creatively will define success in their adult lives and I am proud that these qualities are displayed so readily by staff, pupils and parents at Downsend.

Thank you also for your support in completing your Voice of the Parent surveys, which give us a real insight into what we do well and what we need to work on to do even better. One such area is cleaning, which will begin to improve markedly next month as we have now appointed new contractors to provide us with an enhanced service.

*Ian Thorpe*

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## Lower School Update

I have been absolutely delighted this week to see the number of Pobble published works from Downsend writers rise steadily, and with them the number of views of our children's fantastic writing. We now have 121 published works from Lower School authors and over 1000 views - this is awesome! Thank you to all of the parents who have been online to view their child's work and to leave a positive comment. The pride that the children have from sharing their endeavours in this way is wonderful to see. I look forward over the coming weeks to seeing more and more superb work being shared on this global platform. It is the launch of BBC Radio 2's '500 Words' competition this week and, looking at the quality of work on Pobble, perhaps we might have a potential winner amongst us!

Other academic congratulations this week go to Alex in 3NL for his superb paragraphing, Noah in 3NL for his fantastic column multiplication skills and Matys 4EF for his wonderful timeline showing the Anglo Saxon's place in British history. Well done too to Mrs Carmody's RAISE mathematicians Beste (3NL), Austin (3VB), Spencer (3NL) and Jamie (3NL) for your fantastic Maths investigations which showed critical thinking skills in abundance.

Thank you and well done to all of the Year 3 and Year 5 teachers and children for their wonderful flexibility and 'can do' attitudes this week as they relocated to new rooms in the school. This was to mitigate any impact the noise of the build might have had on teaching and learning. Everyone embraced this change as an adventure and all are now settled in their new homes. Well done for your brilliant approach, everyone.

Finally, in my assembly last week we talked about how small changes can make a big difference and I have been absolutely delighted by the adjustments I have seen: people being even more cheerful in their morning greetings to one another, better awareness of the importance of clearing their things away in the Dining Room and an improvement in manners – this is great! In Assembly this week we looked at the Duke and Duchess of Sussex's decision to step away from the limelight and step back as senior royals. It was enlightening to hear the views and opinions of children from all Lower School year groups and to listen to their perspective and mature understanding of this global news story. With advanced, reflective thinkers like this, I can't help but feel that our future is in safe hands!

Have a wonderful weekend!

*Clare Kirkham, Head of Lower School*

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## Upper School Update

Howard House has been a delight this week, and it's been lovely to see the Year 3 children and parents in 3CC and 3ST passing by my office door on the way to their new classrooms upstairs each morning. The Upper School pupils have welcomed them seamlessly, so well done on a highly successful first week in your new homes!

Academically, this has been another good week and congratulations go to Huzaifa A in Year 8 for being invited to sit the Scholarship exams at CLFS on the strength of his entrance test performance, and to the following Year 6 pupils:- Ben L. Martha G. Louie N, Jemima J. Caitlin B. and Jake N. for accumulating so many House points and Credits that they have now been awarded their first Headmasters commendations; well done to you all!

I had the pleasure of 7FF's company this morning during form time and we had a quick tidy up of the storage lockers, which were largely excellent, so well done to all the Upper School pupils for keeping this area well organised. Moving forwards, to assist in this regard, the plan is to update these lockers with vertical dividers, giving each child an individual locker for their things, which I know will help enormously.

Last week I highlighted our new breakfast provision and menu, and congratulations go to Freya B.W in Year 6 for ordering the first ever Downsend breakfast Omelette on Monday, which proved to be a sign of things to come as the Dining Hall has been inundated with happy and hungry children from all Year groups ordering omelettes, waffles and beans, cereals and toast each morning. It was particularly busy after early morning cricket on Wednesday and Thursday, and Doug even did pancakes today as a special treat! Thanks again to the catering team for their cheerful and willing service; the early signs are that this has been a terrific addition to our catering provision!

In terms of expansion news, after consultation with both our Upper School pupils, parents and staff, I am pleased to say we have now confirmed our new Senior School uniform design, and Stevenson's of Epsom are now working to ensure that stock is available to try on and order by the summer term for the 30-40 families who will be starting Year 9 in September.



Thanks to Mr Skitt for organising our first ever careers fair from 2:20-4:20pm during the STRETCH programme on 31<sup>st</sup> January, where our pupils will hear presentations and be able to answer questions on possible career paths in areas including Aeronautical/Space Engineering and Insurance, Journalism & Music, Media, Communications, Banking and Project Management, General Practice, Theatrical Agency, Veterinary practice and Pharmaceuticals. In advance, can I thank all those parents and colleagues assisting for volunteering to come in and present to our pupils; these sessions will prove invaluable to the children and parents in making their final GCSE choices so thank you so much for giving up your time and expertise!

In addition, on the 12th March we have our GCSE 'Options' evening at 6pm, when the 'optional' subjects for GCSE will be discussed, and we will be outlining the course content in those subjects to assist in making your final GCSE choices.

Finally, and as always, I wanted to say a huge well done to all our Year 8 guides who looked after our 7+ visitors today; you were all amazing, kind and knowledgeable and the parents who fed back to me were universally impressed with your confidence and pride in the school.

Well done again to all our Upper School pupils on a superb start to the term!

*Karl Newland, Head of Upper School*

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## Year 3 - Greek Day

On Tuesday, Year 3 enjoyed dressing up for Greek Day - there was a strong STEAM and drama focus to activities - the children developed their team building and collaborative skills through a range of activities, including making the Parthenon out of spaghetti and marshmallows, performing the myth of Daedalus and Icarus, and taking part in our own Downsend Olympics, as well as painting terracotta pots with their own wonderful Ancient Greek designs.



Year 3 Greek Day was fun and exciting and we learnt what it would be like to live in Ancient Greek times. I dressed up as a Greek goddess. First we went to a tricky but fun lesson about pot painting. Then I learnt the poem about Daedalus and Icarus and made a mask. I enjoyed making a spaghetti and marshmallow parthenon.

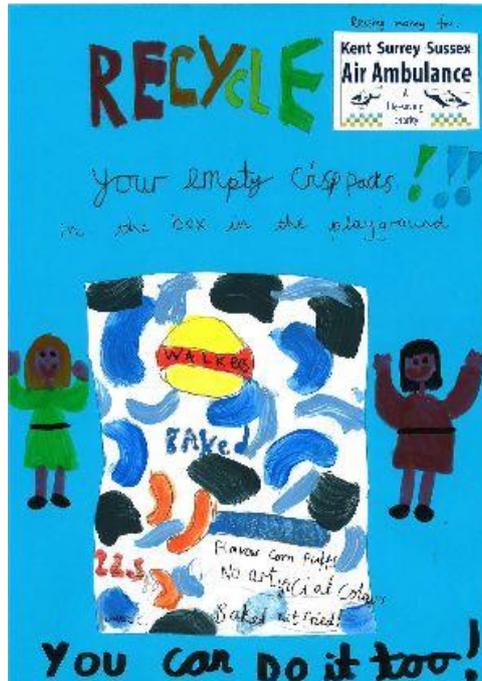
Flora H, 3NL

*Natasha Ludlum*

## Lower School Eco Club



This term the Lower School has set up a new Eco Club, where the children will be taking part in practical activities such as sorting crisp packets for recycling, carrying out surveys to find out about energy, plastic and water waste and looking at how to improve biodiversity in the new Wellbeing Garden. We have started the process of working towards becoming an Eco School, setting up an Eco Council and formulating an action plan for the school.



Part of this includes promoting more recycling, such as the crisp packet scheme, which is in aid of the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance. Whilst not wanting to encourage unhealthy eating, if you do have packets of crisps from the weekend, please drop them off in the box in the Turret on a Monday morning. A recycling bin for crisp packets is also in the playground during morning breaks. Thank you for your ongoing support for these projects.

*Mrs Ludlam and Mrs Day*

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## Year 7 Ambassadors Announced



Congratulations to our new **Year 7 Ambassadors** who have been selected by their tutors to lead the way this term. Good luck with running the Year 4 reading focus groups before school and other roles you might be given!



## Artist Of The Week



This week's Artist of the Week is Sadie in 6MD for her wonderful interpretation of a cave painting. Our History of Art Stretch programme began again last week and we explored cave paintings and learnt about the different methods and materials that would have been used to create these works of art. It got a bit messy as we created colours from turmeric, beetroot, red cabbage, clay and charcoal, but it was lots of fun!

*Julia Aylen*

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## Music News

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### Exam Success

Congratulations to the following pupils who took practical music examinations recently and were enormously successful! We are very proud of them all.

Amy Jiang, 2CW Piano Grade 3

Alex Briggs, 6ST Percussion Grade 1

Jeremy Downing, 5LC Percussion Grade 1  
Sienna Avellini, 5AG Percussion Grade 1  
Jake Nae, 6ST Drum Kit Grade 2 (Distinction)  
Luca Massetti, 5PM Percussion Grade 2  
Dylan Young, 2SB Drum Kit Grade 2 (Distinction)  
Alex Young, 5CD Drum Kit Grade 3 (Distinction)  
Martha Gale, 6MD Voice Grade 1 (Distinction)  
Aimee Jackson, 7BD Voice Grade 1  
Jessica Ribet, 4JN Voice Grade 1  
Isabella Cross, 4RD Voice Grade 1  
Anna Hasner, 3CC Voice Prep Test  
Olivia Brember, 7BD Piano Grade 1  
Daniel Romanov, 8AD Piano Grade 1 (Distinction)  
Octavia Mackie, 5AG clarinet Grade 4 (Distinction)  
Horatio Mackie, 5PM Trumpet Grade 4 (Distinction)

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## Charterhouse Strings Day

On Thursday afternoon Jerome and Alex had a wonderful afternoon with around 20 other string players from Prep Schools in the area hosted by Charterhouse School. For the first section of the afternoon they rehearsed chamber music pieces in small groups, led by 6<sup>th</sup> Form pupils and later everyone got together to prepare *Montagues and Capulets* by Prokofiev and a section of the well-loved *Pizzicato Polka*. It was a wonderful opportunity to make music with older more experienced players and our boys were excellent!



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## Nicola Benedetti Orchestra Event

A group of young musicians, among them Annabel E (4EF) and Horatio M (5PM), attended a weekend workshop in London last weekend for string players. It was a two-day event with the violinist Nicola Benedetti.

Speaking about the sessions, Nicola explained, “The Benedetti Foundation will work with young people on building discipline, professionalism, concentration and perseverance as well as addressing the deeply important emotional, social, internal and psychological challenges young people face, through the act of conscientious music making and collective activity. We will discuss what it is to patiently listen, to be fully present, to express thoughts and feelings with clarity and integrity, and to empathetically support each other to achieve a collective goal.”





“Annabel participated as a violinist in the Nicola Benedetti Orchestra session in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on Saturday (11<sup>th</sup> of Jan). Over 200 children from all over the UK gathered together in Southbank to play Bartok’s Romanian Folk Dances (Movements 4 to 6) on the day. Children were given many preparational videos beforehand and received rhythm, vocal and technical trainings throughout the day before they performed. It was an amazingly inspiring experience for Annabel to play with so many young musicians.” *Mrs E.*

Photos kindly provided by Mrs Eaves, and a link below to a fabulous clip of one of the pieces. Enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/wxMYwnyFx7s>

*Mrs Allison*

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## 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](mailto:nicole.allison@downsend.co.uk)

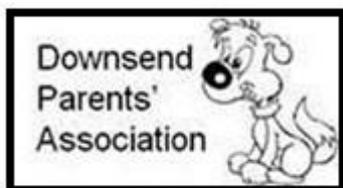
We have tutors for the following instruments:

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*



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## **Uniform Sale - Main site, Tuesday 21 January @ 3.45-4.30pm**



Don't forget that the first preloved Uniform Sale of the new decade will take place at Main site on Tuesday 21 January from 3.45pm until 4.30pm.

Please make your way to the Drama Room on the second floor of the Sports Hall, near the sports office where the DPA team of volunteers will be waiting to help you. Note that we can accept cash or cards at this sale.

A reminder that, unfortunately we are not able to receive items for sale on this date due to lack of storage.

Also, by way of an update, we have now sent cheques to all parents whose surnames start with A-J where we were able to sell uniform items during academic year 18/19. We had so many cheques to write, we have run out so we are waiting for a delivering from HSBC imminently, so Lynn is poised, pen at the ready to complete cheques for parents with surnames starting with K-Z. Hopefully we will get these to you before the end of this term but we will let you know when we are issuing them.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Lynn Godwin @ [downsendPA@gmail.com](mailto:downsendPA@gmail.com).

## DPA Quiz night - Friday 28 February - tickets on sale from w/c 20 January



The hotly anticipated DPA Quiz night will take place in the Dining Hall on Friday 28 February from 7.30pm. The format will be the same, and we invite you to start thinking about collating your winning quiz team!

You can register your team and submit payment via Class List during w/c 20 January, so please watch out for the Class List alert that will let you know when the registration form is live!

Any questions, please let Leanne know by emailing us at [downsendPA@gmail.com](mailto:downsendPA@gmail.com).

## DPA Summer Ball - Saturday 20 June - Denbies Wine Estate



Following the DPA Quiz in March, our next show stopping event is the DPA Summer Ball! This year the event will be held on Saturday 20 June at the wonderful Denbies Wine Estate.

Early bird tickets will go on sale via Class List on Monday 02 March until end of day Friday 27 March, where the tickets will then revert to full price.

We will provide you with more info via Class List in the coming weeks, but feel free to get in touch with the DPA Summer Ball team if you have any questions - [downsendPA@gmail.com](mailto:downsendPA@gmail.com).

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**INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS**

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