



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL



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

DOWNSEND TIMES

07 February 2020



A Message from the Headmaster



We are now four weeks into the Arts Centre build and there was much excitement amongst the pupils with the arrival of giant cement mixers on Monday. With the outline of the footprint taking shape, as you will see in the accompanying photos, we are starting to visualise the difference this fantastic facility will make to our school. We will be creating a couple of vision panels in the new hoardings (one at adult height, one at child height) so that you can see the progress for yourselves as the building grows. With the Autumn Term being longer than the Summer Term, we are now entering the second half of the academic year; days are getting longer and Spring is just around the corner, so there is much to look forward to. This aura of positivity is certainly proving to be the bedrock of our school, as you have reflected in your Voice of the Parent responses. The survey has now closed and we look forward to sharing the feedback with you shortly.

Our Upper School parents will have noticed that Mr Newland has been absent from school over recent days. After 30 years of teaching, chickenpox has finally caught up with Mr Newland, but I am in regular contact with him and he is very grateful for the best wishes that you have sent him. I am sure he will back on his feet shortly, and running the Upper School with his customary energy and enthusiasm. In the meantime, if you have any questions pertaining to the Upper School, please contact the relevant Head of Year, Mr Silva, or one of the SLT and we will be happy to help.

Ian Thorpe, Headmaster

Lower School Update

This is Mrs Kirkham reporting from Downsend School...no, actually it's Year 5 reporting from Downsend School, or it certainly was on Monday in Assembly when some Year 5 Newsround reporters presented their iMovies on issues close to their hearts to the rest of the Lower School. Climate change, helping indigenous animals, the Australian bush fires and water pollution were amongst the issues presented to the school. Showcasing skills in research, media, persuasion and public speaking the presentations had the rest of the Lower School rapt. Well done to Amelia B, Katie C, Eddie T, Archie D, Max S, Elliott M, Luca M and Aidan W for all of their hard work.

This week I have the pleasure of looking at books from every class in the Lower School. Seeing the evidence of such exciting teaching, such an engagement in learning and such high expectations of the children was a real joy! The breadth and challenge really is remarkable and I'm sure that you will all enjoy seeing evidence of this in your own child's books at one of the Parents' Evenings, happening before and after half term. Reports will be issued to parents after these evenings and will contain the key information discussed with you about your child's strengths and targets to help them make more progress in the future. We hope that you find these valuable, inciteful and constructive.

Gold star tokens have raced out of my office this week and academic congratulations have been plentiful. Well done to Millie H, Francesca B, Arabella B, Alex F, Artie B and Noah K in 3ST for their wonderful mythological writing. Superb language choices and awareness of genre from you all – well done! Well done too to Pravini J and Charlotte R in 5AG for their wonderful work on complex division – thank you for explaining it to me! Katie C and Ava C in 5LC also get a mention this week for their fantastic work on the rock cycle, which was as visually interesting as it was factual! Finally, Darcey J-M and George D brought me mind-bending Maths work this week where they were solving multiplication problems in a dominos chain – this involved self-checking their work to be able to get the next problem to solve and required use of their developing critical thinking skills. Well done!

Finally, please can I take this opportunity to remind parents that the snacks brought in from home must be a healthy snack which will keep your child going from breakfast until lunch. Sugary snacks – such as Party Rings, some cereal bars and cookies - actually have a detrimental effect on learning and behaviour after break time. Crisps – such as the Monster Munch, Wotsits and grab bags of Doritos I have seen this week – are also not classified as a healthy snack. Please do not send these items in with your children as they will not be allowed to eat them. Fruit, vegetable sticks, popcorn, crackers or a small sandwich are all allowed and really will give the children the fuel they need to learn. This will also help the school's new Eco Committee on their quest to reduce the amount of rubbish in school by reducing single-use plastic waste. Healthy snack choices have been discussed with the children this week by Form Tutors and we would all be very grateful for your support with this.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Upper School Update

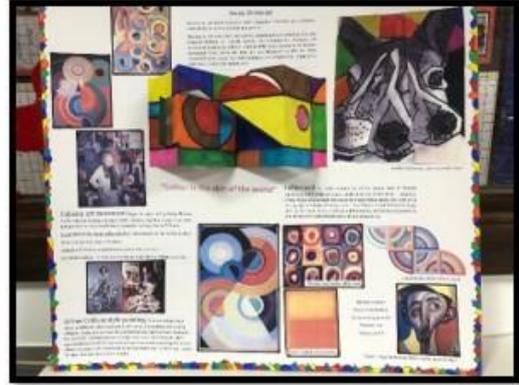
In the absence of Mr Newland, it has fallen to me to update you with news from the Upper School this week. Continuing with the positive impact Class Charts is having within the Upper School, I was delighted to award the following Year 6 commendations this week:- Rhyen P, Oscar R, Chloe S, Toby H, Can E, Theo J-M, Davide P, Alfie A, Amelie P, Ella P-K, James R, Daniel-James O, John C, Yusuf E, Teddy S. Amongst Year 7, congratulations go to Darius G-P and Rhys H for being the first in the year to reach their next Headmasters' Commendation (purple). In Year 8, Mia K, Alice G, and Thomas U must be congratulated on being the first ones to earn over 600 house points and in doing so have earned their silver Headmaster's Commendation. A huge well done to you all! Their badges will be awarded during Monday's assembly.

We're also delighted that the new Eco Council met for the first time today to discuss all manner of environmental issues at Downsend and in line with our aim of going paperless. Many thanks to Mrs Ludlam for taking the lead on this and to the Upper School council members (Toby H and Lily H from Y6, Joseph C and Lily P in Y7 and Anita B and Jude G in Y8) for their valuable contributions. It was also a pleasure to congratulate the new Y6 Class Captains this week who I'm sure are looking forward to their increased responsibility in the upcoming weeks. Well done to Daniel-James (6MD), Chloe S (6MSK), Caitlin B (6ST) and Toby D (6CB).

The senior girls have had an outstanding week of results on the netball court with the 1st- 4th teams all winning their matches this week in spectacular style. The most commendable efforts go to the 1st team for their amazing second half come-back. They were 4-11 down and managed to persevere to win the match 18-14. A fantastic display of determination from the girls, which was a pleasure to watch by all.

This week has also seen the Upper School celebrate Pace2Be's Children's Mental Health Week, which was designed to shine a spotlight on the importance of children and young people's mental health. Mrs Sehgal spoke to all children in the Upper School and challenged them to '**Find your Brave**' which was the recurring theme all week. There were some great examples shared by both pupils and staff of instances where they have had to dig deep, find their courage and be brave. It's so important that our pupils know that bravery isn't about coping alone or holding things in, but finding positive ways to deal with challenging situations, overcoming physical and mental hurdles and looking after themselves. My thanks to Mrs Sehgal for her energy in delivering this hugely important message.

Continuing with the STEAM-based skills that we value so much at Downsend, I was speechless at the quality of some of the creativity of our pupils as demonstrated in their Technology projects which Mrs Day has been coordinating. Below are a couple of examples of some of their stunning homeworks on Cartoons (Y7) and Cubism (Y8).



Next week being the last week of this half of term, it doesn't get any quieter for the Upper School. Year 6 pupils will be rummaging through their kitchen cupboards and donning their chef's hats in readiness for the Year 6 Bake Off which has a 'Love It' theme. We are also awaiting the inaugural auditions for Downsend's Greatest Dancer and expecting lots of pupils to grab their pompoms/tutus/tap dancing shoes and get involved.

I also look forward to seeing our Year 8 parents next Tuesday and Thursday for the Parent-Teacher interviews which will also include PE and the Creative Arts for the first time. In the meantime, I wish you all a fantastic weekend.

Lee Silva, Deputy Head of Upper School

Year 2 Trip to The Living Rainforest





Earlier this week, our intrepid Year 2 explorers visited The Living Rainforest in Newbury. As they entered the greenhouses, the first things they noticed were the warm and sticky air, the trees towering through a network of enormous leaves, vines and ferns and the scuttling and scampering of little animals on the forest floor.

The children discovered an amazing array of plants and tropical rainforest animals including: poison dart frogs, a water-dragon who was so well camouflaged that it took a while to spot him, and an armadillo. But undoubtedly the highlight of the trip was watching the two-toed sloth nibble his way through his feast of fruit and vegetables and then slowly move out of sight to curl up in the branches of the canopy. The children impressed their tour guides with their already good knowledge of rainforest conditions and learnt how many of the foods and medicines originate from rainforest environments, which are home to more than half of the world's species of plants and animals. On their return to school, the children took inspiration from Lynne Cherry's book, "The Great Kapok Tree" and their visit, to write poems and stories set amongst the wild and breath-taking beauty of the Amazon.

The Year 2 Team

Artist Of The Week



This week's artist of the week is Lottie C in 3NL. Year 3 have been using their colour mixing skills to make tints and shades and Lottie has demonstrated great skill, creating this atmospheric winter landscape. Well done!

Julia Aylen

HOUSE DANCE COMPETITION
GROUPS CAN BE MIXED FROM DIFFERENT HOUSES

**DOWNSEND'S
GREATEST DANCER!!**

Sign-up sheets for the auditions will be in the
Tregenna and Peterborough Halls

Auditions to be held:

**Lower School - Wednesday 12th & Friday 14th February in the
Peterborough Hall - 12.40-1.20**

**Upper School - Wednesday 12th & Friday 14th February in the
Tregenna Hall - 1.40-2.20**

A second round of auditions will be held after half term
with the final acts competing at whole school assembly on
Friday 20th March!

Music News

Surrey Schools Concert - Tickets now available

In less than 6 weeks' time, some of our pupils will be performing in the Surrey Schools Concert. We are delighted to let you know that tickets are now on sale, and we would love to see as many parents and families as possible there supporting them. For more information and to book, please click on the following link: <https://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events/surrey-schools-concert>

Well done to Octavia, Horatio, and Alex, who had a great time recently at their first National Youth Jazz Collective rehearsal.



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.

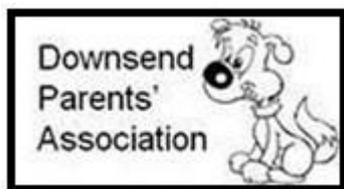
If your child would like to play an instrument that is not listed above, please let me know and I will try to source a tutor for you.

Nicole Allison

Downsend Plus Holiday Club Availability



As always we have an action-packed schedule of activities planned for the February, Easter & May School holidays. Downsend Plus Booking Forms and information on courses are available on the website. If you need further details, please contact Rebecca Peek on 01372 385403.



DPA Quiz Night - SOLD OUT!



Thank you to all of those who purchased a ticket to the upcoming DPA Quiz night on Friday 28 Feb! Thanks to another exceptional response from our wonderful Community, we can now confirm that the event is sold out and we are no longer accepting any additional bookings.

For those of you who were lucky enough to bag a ticket, we are looking forward to seeing you there for a night of amazing Mexican food, quiz-tastic competition and lots of laughter! More info will be shared with the quiz table leads in the coming weeks but in the meantime, if you have any questions, get in touch with Leanne and the DPA Quiz Team @ downsendPA@gmail.com

INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS

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