



**DOWNSEND**  
SCHOOL



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

# DOWNSEND TIMES



## A Message from the Headmaster

Valentine's Day has coincided with the end of a busy half-term and I hope that you will spend the break with the people that you love, doing all the things that you love, in order to recharge your batteries. Thank you for all of your messages of support in terms of our approach to managing the issue of Coronavirus; we are collating the information that has been presented to us and will be liaising with health professionals to ensure that we take the right steps to safeguard all members of the Downsend community.

The last few weeks have been a heady mix of academic creativity and excellence (just look at the Year 4s and Iron Man Day today), sporting successes for boys and girls, musical performances (including this week's excellent Brass Concert), Debating and the Townsend-Warner History achievements and the start of our Arts Centre build. Thank you for all your patience with any disruption in the car park. Most importantly, it

has been great to see your children bounding into school each morning, as was commented to me by a parent on the door this morning. Sunnier weather is just around the corner and we can all look forward to the second half of the academic year with increasing confidence.

*Ian Thorpe, Headmaster*

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## Lower School Update

It has been a bumper week this week in the Lower School with a huge amount of educationally enriching – and really good fun - events taking place. Possibly the most special of these was our visit from the charity 52 Lives, who spoke to us about the joy of being kind and extending your kindness to others – more on this from Year 4 below. The teachers were close to tears on several occasions on seeing the kindness shown by our Year 4 children – we were so very proud of them. Well done, Year 4.

Tuesday saw the Year 5 Open Classroom, where many of our Year 5 parents came into school early to look at their children's work. Several parents have remarked to me about the pride and excitement their children showed in their work and how they really felt the sparkle of our 'Inspiring Young Minds' mission. Having looked at the books as part of my academic monitoring last week – I can see why the children were so proud of their achievements – well done, Year 5.

On a personal note, I have been thoroughly enjoying Doug's breakfasts this week, with the particular highlight being a hot, gluten-free, pancake this morning – delicious! Feedback on the breakfasts has been overwhelmingly positive so the only tweak we will be making next half term is one for the safety of the children. As I announced in the whole school assembly today, we would ask that children coming for breakfast drop their bags to their cloakroom/peg before coming in to eat. This will eliminate trip hazards and also mean that the children are packed away ready for the start of the school day at 8.30am. A huge thanks to Doug and his team for helping us to all to begin the day in such a positive and delicious way!

This week I had the most incredible range of work brought into my office which I hugely enjoyed spending time looking at. I had the pleasure of seeing an outstanding, and beautifully constructed, rock project by Finley K in 3ST, a portfolio of stunning art work by Lottie C in 3NL, some very challenging 3 digit by 1 digit multiplication from Robert B and Alex C in Year 4, a stunning rainforest mixed-media picture from Rebecca L in 2CC and wonderful myths showing great language, structure and Classical awareness from Dominic M, Jamie B, Flora H, Oscar B, Zac D and Archie R in Year 3. Well done. It was also lovely, on Valentine's Day, to see some wonderful scatter technique paintings from Jessica R and Rosemary B in Year 4, with a heart theme – they were beautiful enough to hang on the wall, I only wish they were mine! Well done to everyone.



It really has been a terrific, happy and fulfilling half term and I wish all the Lower School families a very happy, healthy and restful half term break, wherever you are spending it. Please come back to us in one piece and raring to go as I have a feeling that next half term will be just as exciting as this one has been!

*Clare Kirkham, Head of Lower School*

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## Upper School Update

This has been another full-on week within the Upper School, and pupils and staff alike are relieved that the half term break is now in sight. The week started off with the usual celebration of pupils who had reached their housepoint milestones. In Year 7, the commendations are coming in thick and fast now: Henry, Aiden, Ralph H, Monty, Harrison, Seb, Olivia, Rajan, Arya, Louie L, Alice, Lisa, Tom, Finlay, Kierra and Alfie all reached their first Headmaster's Commendation. A couple more pupils have also gained their second Headmaster's Commendation which is a great achievement: Rhys and Joseph. In Year 8, Josie, George, Jack M, Jack L, Jamie Z, Chloe, Michelle have earned their Bronze Headmaster's Commendation whilst Anita and Jasmine have now jumped onto their Silver Commendation. A stunning achievement, and well-timed to get that done by half term. Congratulations to all pupils who received their Commendations this

week.

As part of **Safer Internet Day 2020** on Tuesday, we got involved with raising awareness of the importance of online safety, as we took part in various activities across the school. Themes such as cyberbullying, social media and online gaming were discussed amongst the year groups and generated healthy and intelligent conversations. With digital technology so easily available at our fingertips, it's important that we empower pupils to use it positively to learn, exchange, participate and create whilst all the while being responsible and respectful. These are important traits whether online or face to face and I would encourage parents to have open and honest conversations with your children about their online habits.



Tuesday also saw our Year 6 pupils overloading the Upper School with a plethora of cakes, biscuits, and all things sweet. I was only disappointed that I didn't get to sample more of their offerings, even though I had gallantly offered to 'offload' some from pupils at the turret first thing in the morning! My thanks to Mrs Day for organising this event and helping to raise another £106 from the sale of the cakes for the Merstham Mix Community Café. Congratulations to house winners Andrew M-T, Hugo F, Chloe S and Polly G-G and thank you to all pupils who supported this event.





You knew it was Katsu for lunch yesterday by the excitement of the children (and myself) all morning. We certainly weren't disappointed come lunchtime, with the Year 8 children gleefully informing me of how many pieces of chicken they had actually managed to eat. The record was in double figures and even put me to shame! Katsu over, we now have to wait for another painful four weeks.

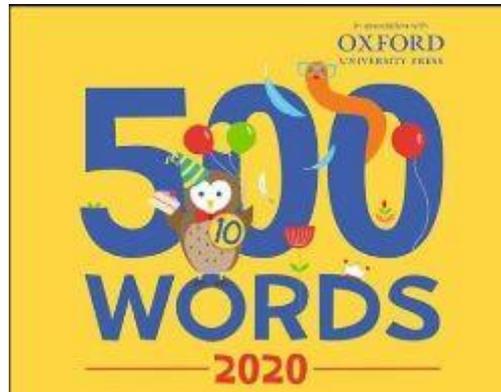
On Tuesday and Thursday this week our Year 8 parents had the opportunity to discuss the progress of their children at the Parent-Teacher interviews. It was pleasing to hear the positive journeys that pupils are making, and the high quality of feedback being given. It was good to see so many pupils also attended both evenings to hear what their teachers had to say and therefore were able to be part of those useful conversations.

All pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 were spoken to this week about their Downsend Diplomas and have been given the task of reflecting on their achievements over the first half of the academic year and to start populating their Diplomas on the VLE. This should be done over half term so that tutors can look at the information and start having conversations to help guide pupils along their individual journeys. Whilst I hope that the half term break offers pupils a chance to rest and enjoy themselves, some targeted revision would be a good idea as there are upcoming assessments for Year 6, 7 and 8 pupils. Revision material is available on the VLE and pupils should be encouraged to work on areas recommended for improvement as advised by their subject teachers. I wish 8S pupils the best of luck as they tackle their scholarship exams in the week after half term. They are peaking at the right time and I'm sure will all give a good account of themselves at their Senior Schools during the week of the 24<sup>th</sup> February. Finally, I wish all our pupils, parents and staff a wonderful half term break and hope that Cupid has brought you chocolates / flowers / cards in plentiful supplies on this Valentine's Day.

*Lee Silva, Deputy Head of Upper School*

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## '500 Words' Story Competition



Fancy a writing challenge over half term? RAISE Writers have been busy typing up their creative stories for the BBC Radio 2 500 Words Competition and Miss Friend would like to invite everyone to enter. All you need to do is write a wonderful story of up to 500 words and visit the website to submit it. It can be about ANYTHING you want – space-ships, grannies, insects, time travel. The list is endless!

Stories are judged anonymously, without regard to grammar, punctuation or spelling, so don't get bogged down in these if you have a fantastic idea – just make sure your work is 100% your own. The competition culminates in a broadcast extravaganza of live music and sensational story-telling every summer, at a special venue. 500 Words is an open invitation to the wide world of imagination, so it's time to get those creative cogs turning!

To help you get started, the BBC website is packed full of helpful hints and terrific tips to bust through the writer's block. You can download a learning pack from the [LEARN section](#), where you can also find advice from celebrity judges Frank Cottrell Boyce and Charlie Higson in the 500 Words Live Lesson. If you are in need of inspiration, pop over to the [500 Words Blog](#) to discover top tips to create terrific tales written by previous winners, amazing authors and a few of the 500 Words elves.

It would be lovely to have lots of entries from Downsend, so please submit these yourselves via [the BBC entries page](#), but mention our school name. The deadline is Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 8pm.

*Miss Friend*

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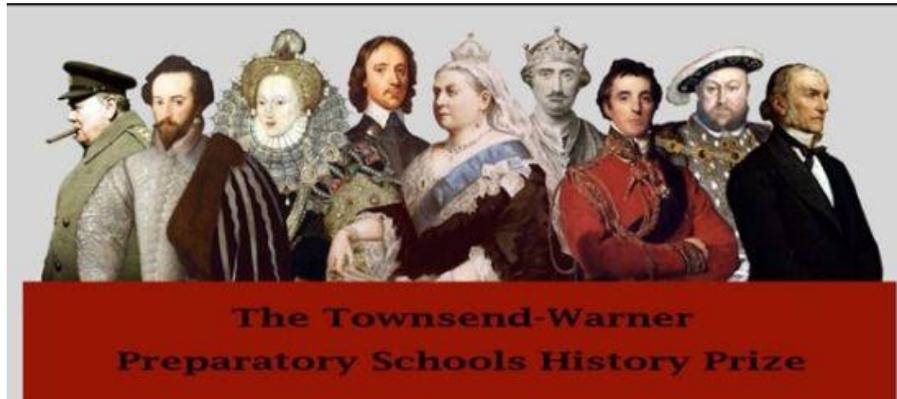
## Years 3-5 Kindness Workshop



On Wednesday, children and teachers from Years 3-5 took part in an inspiring Kindness Workshop, linked to our PSHE topics, led by Greig from the charity 52 Lives. We learnt about the benefits to ourselves and others of being kind, and found out about different children who had been helped by this project. Our challenge was to find creative ways to show kindness and create cards and messages for a seven year old boy called Dylan, who is very unwell with kidney disease. At the end of the workshop, we had an assembly where we were all challenged to 'be the change you wish to see in the world.' All the cards and models are now being sent to Dylan and his family and he will have a wonderful surprise at receiving such thoughtful messages and gifts.

Mrs Ludlum

## Townsend Warner History Prize 2020



### First Round

In January a selection of children from Year 6, Year 7 and Year 8 took part in the first round of the Townsend Warner History Prize. This competition started over 130 years ago and it is one of the oldest institutions in the preparatory school world. It is not linked to any national testing or examinations, but aims to provoke interest and delight in historical reading, facts and analysis. It regularly produces winners of remarkable calibre, writing history of much flair and knowledge.

The Prize consists of two papers. The first has 100 questions demanding one-word, or one-sentence, answers from world history, but with a strong emphasis on British history. Many are straightforward, some a little more obscure. Over 1000 students sat this paper last month and only the 250 candidates qualify from Paper 1 to sit Paper 2.

I am very proud to announce the following have made it through to Paper 2:

- Jacob S
- Alexander B

These two have done incredibly well and I wish them all the very best of luck for Paper 2 which will be held towards the end of this month.

I would also like to thank all those children from Year 6, Year 7 and Year 8 who took part. I was incredibly impressed with the high quality and range of knowledge that was displayed in what was a tough Paper 1.

*Helen Black, Head of History*

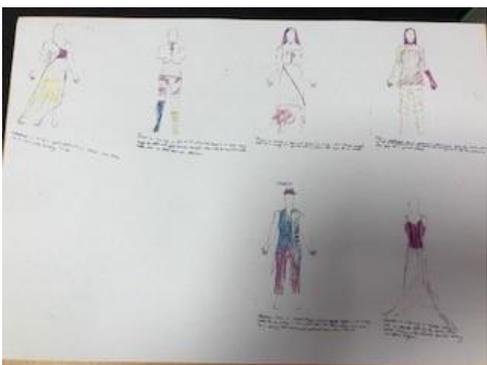
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# Year 7 English

This term Year 7 have been studying Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mrs Haylett set her class a homework project to explore the Forest (and its inhabitants!) from the play. Pupils had to choose from the following options:

- Devise a map of Athens and the Woods
- Design a website for 'a wood near Athens' with the aim to attract tourists
- Create a mood board to show how the world of the woods should look on stage
- Sketch a design for a stage set for a production of the play
- Design costumes for the fairy world.

Here is a selection of the work produced – well done to all!





- Mushrooms – Alice Underwood – Y7
- Penguins and Dolphins – Annabel Eaves – Y4

Well done on such fantastic work!

*Dr Kirby, Head of Science*

## House Photography Competition

**HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHY**

**2020**



**OUTDOORS  
SPORT  
PORTRAIT**

Choose one of the categories above. These are just starting points and can be interpreted in many ways.

Think about how you might capture your photo... Have plenty of attempts at capturing the perfect shot!

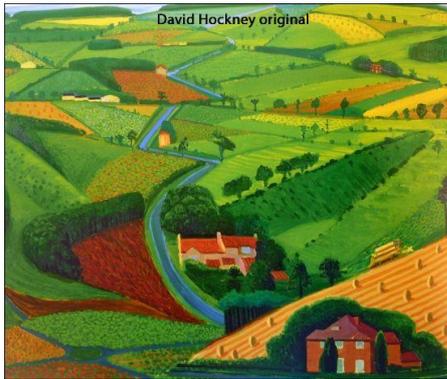
Choose your favourite, print it and hand it in to Mr Howe in the Sports Office.

**5 housepoints for every entry.**

**Label your photograph with your name, class and house.**

**Entries to Mr Howe by Friday 28 February**

## Artist Of The Week



This week's Artists of the Week are 4RD who have worked collaboratively to recreate one of David Hockney's landscapes. They applied great skill blending oil pastels and layering colours, and communicated effectively with one another to ensure their pieces matched up. It looks fantastic; well done!

*Julia Ayles*

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## Music News

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### Brass Concert

George Boote's pupils played beautifully in the Informal Music Concert that was held on Wednesday evening. Well done to all!



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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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## 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.

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## Happy Valentines Day from the DPA!



Blazers are red,  
Book bags are too.  
The DPA love,  
To bring great events to you!

As you head into the half term holiday, don't forget the key DPA event dates for the coming half term and beyond:

28 Feb - DPA Quiz night

20 March - Lower School Afternoon Tea

20 June - DPA Summer Ball at Denbies Wine Estate

Do let us know if you have any questions but emailing [downsendPA@gmail.com](mailto:downsendPA@gmail.com)!

In the meantime, Happy Valentines Day and enjoy the half term break.

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## INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS

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