

# DOWNSEND PRE-PREP TIMES



Downsend School Pre-Prep Epsom  
6 Norman Avenue  
Epsom KT17 3AB

## Epsom

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020



epsompre-prep@downsend.co.uk  
www.downsend.co.uk  
Tel: 01372 385438

## Message from Mrs Conlan

This week we welcomed everyone back for the Summer term to Downsend Pre-Prep Epsom online. Although it has not gone without a few glitches along the way, overwhelmingly the feedback from both parents and teachers has been phenomenally positive. The teachers are loving seeing the children and being able to chat with them, but most importantly to pick up on progressing their learning and supporting them to move forward.

We have had some wonderful feedback from parents too about the way their children are engaging in the online lessons completely independently and therefore parents have been able to get back to some of their own work. We absolutely know what a struggle juggling all the balls is at the moment and while our timetables have been designed with the children's education at the forefront, feedback received at the end of last term from parents regarding family life and your expectations of what the programme should look like were very much taken on board too.

Last week you received the 'end goal' timetables from us, the ones we are working towards achieving by week 3, with a relatively gentle progression towards them over these first two weeks. Please do keep talking to us about how the timetable is working for you. We do have lots of families working with us and we are going to be unable to meet every individual family requirement and expectation, but

we will try to be as flexible as we can to support all of our children as well as we can.

A quick plea from me to all of you please to help support our teachers. Can I ask that:

- Parents do not intervene or talk to the teacher during a lesson. Please email me or the teacher after the lesson if necessary
- Please ensure your child has a space to work and does sit there during lessons. It is very distracting for teachers when children are moving around with devices or eating during lessons

Please do keep sharing with us what is working well and any thoughts on how we can improve, while bearing with us as we settle into new routines and understanding that flexibility on all sides is needed. We didn't have time to consult parents before all this happened as we would have liked to, but we do now see your feedback as our ongoing consultation helping us to shape our programme to enable the very best outcomes for our children.

I hope everyone has a wonderful weekend and that all our families can enjoy another very sunny few days. **Mrs Vanessa Conlan**

### Stop press ....

Some of our club providers are providing online clubs starting on 27<sup>th</sup> April. Please see today's email from Mrs Tucker for further information.

## Gardening

Next week is National Gardening Week and what better way than to make the most of the good weather than by getting the children out and active in the garden. Our very own Miss Julie has been busy in her garden planting potatoes, beetroot, dwarf beans and spring onions. Meanwhile, Tahira from Year 1 has planted up her own 'pot garden' and will be tending and watering her mini plot in the coming weeks. Perhaps your child could join thousands of other people around the country and help to do some weeding or planting next week? If so, please send any photos to Mrs Tucker for the newsletter.



## A New Term and New Beginnings

The start of a new term is always an exciting time and none more so than the Summer Term with its promise of long, warm days to come. While the start to this Summer Term may have taken on a unique and very different form, nonetheless the anticipation of new topics and the chance to catch up with friends was evident in the smiling and enthusiastic reactions the children gave as we switched on our computers to deliver face to face wellbeing and teaching sessions this week. Already, the children are rewarding their teachers with creative and inspiring responses to the lessons and activities on offer, but the photos and work uploaded to Seesaw say more than words alone can describe. **Mrs Lisa Burns**

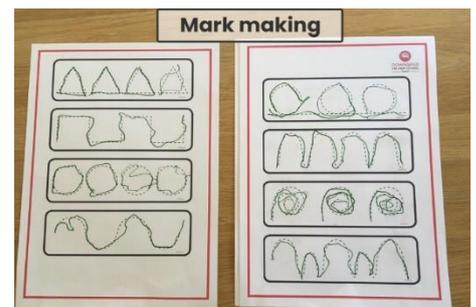


First Steps children are learning about 'Living Things' this half term and the first week of online teaching and learning has focussed on animals in general. It has been lovely to see the children again and to observe the progress they are making with their home learning. I have been delighted and impressed with all the terrific examples of work and exploration that parents and children have sent in. I cannot wait to see how the children get on with their 'I spy and animal games' on Friday and I'm hoping for great voices and lots of participation in our Rhyme Time Sessions. **Mrs Jane Simpson**



Rising Reception are learning all about 'Minibeasts' this half term and we began the topic this week by investigating worms. The children have learnt some interesting facts about worms, created their own worm garden and they made some delicious 'worms in mud' to eat! Next week our teaching and learning focus will be abuzz with all things to do with bees.

**Miss Chantael Clayton**





This term we are learning about dinosaurs in Reception. One of the children's tasks this week was to draw and label a dinosaur. In Maths we have been learning more about subtraction and the children were challenged to make up a subtraction game using a number line. In phonics some children learned the split digraph 'i-e' and wrote sentences with the words they learnt.  
**Mrs Sharon Butler**

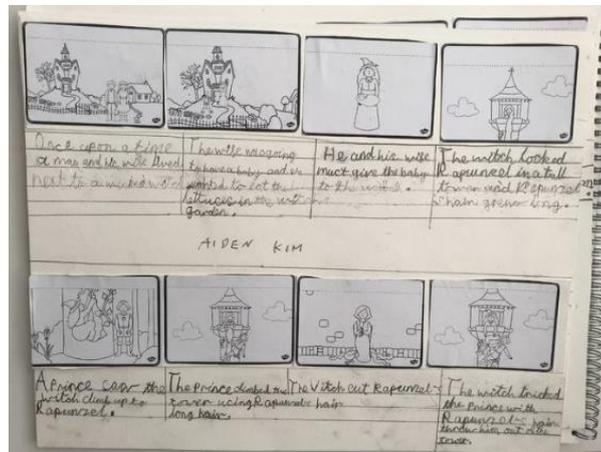


I flew my kite  
 I went down the slide.  
 I flew my kite  
 I went down the slide.



Year 1 have started the term with great enthusiasm and energy. The children have mastered the new online class rules beautifully, come to grips with division in Maths and impressed with their recall already of their new Talk 4 Writing story, 'Rapunzel'. Our new Science topic this term is 'Growing' and the children have already ventured outdoors to plant seeds. Next week, we will set out on a journey to become desert explorers to discover the battles life has to be able to grow and thrive in a harsh climate.

**Mrs Lisa Burns**



Dear Mrs Burns

I really enjoyed playing Kahoot on the world topics. I hope to test my older brother on the facts!

Can you post some more games to play?

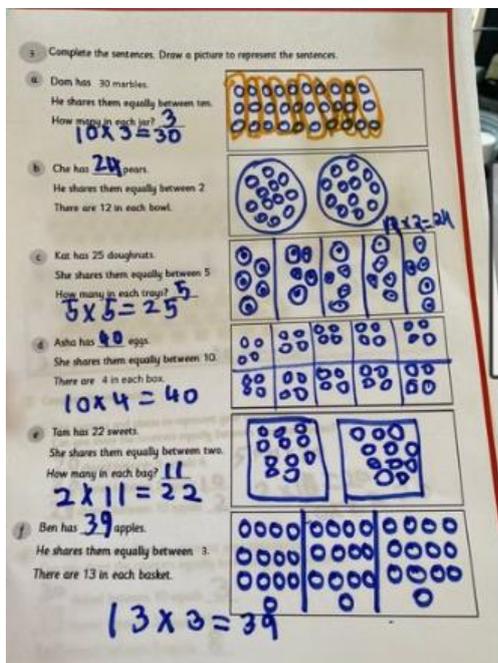
Tahira



Goodness you have been busy looking for soft c items. What an impressive collection. Great work!



**And not forgetting reading ...**



Mrs Conlan shared her favourite book 'Giraffes Can't Dance' in this week's Friday whole school story time. A story that is relevant for these strange times as its message tells us that we can overcome anything if we set our minds to it. And with the support of the extended Epsom family ... your children can.

## Supporting Our Wonderful NHS

Whether they have relatives involved in front line medical care, or because their families value the selfless support that healthcare professionals are giving to the vulnerable and sick, we are proud of the little acts of support and kindness that Epsom Pre-Prep children are performing in support of the NHS. Here are a few:

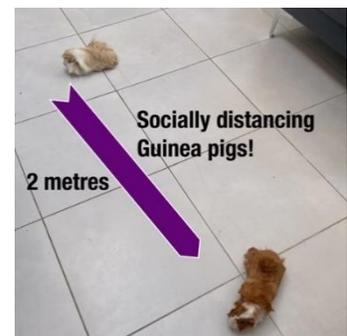
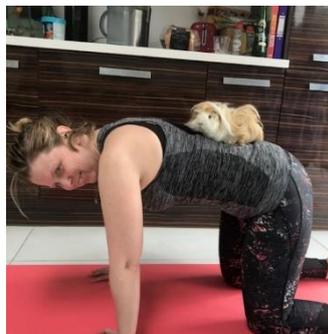


## Perfectly Popular Pets



Our school guinea pigs, Bubble and Squeak have moved in with Mrs Burns's family for the school closure and they are doing a brilliant job at 'mowing' and 'fertilising' the lawn and keeping the dandelions under control! They have also discovered a new favourite food ... kale!

Meanwhile, Mrs Tucker's pet guinea pigs (Cornflake and Nugget) are showing just how resourceful and helpful pets can be. Whether keeping on top of school emails, taking part in therapeutic yoga lessons, helping Mrs Tucker's daughter with her schoolwork or even demonstrating social distancing, they are giving cuddles and smiles in abundance.



We are keen to find out how family pets are helping to entertain, engage and comfort the children at home during the school closure. Please send Mrs Tucker any amusing or cute pictures of what your children and pets are up to and we'll do our best to include them in next week's newsletter.

## Useful contacts



Ext day mob	07594170569
Pre-Prep Epsom	01372 385438
Pre-Prep Ashtead	01372 385439
Pre-Prep L'head	01372 385437
Prep School Office	01372 372197
Admissions	01372 372311
School Nurse	01372 385409
Finance	01372 374842
Marketing	01372 385402
Downsend PP+	07899 011275
Downsend+	01372 385403

## Celebrating Achievement

We continue to celebrate achievements in learning and congratulate the following children this week:

### First Steps

Stella for joining in enthusiastically with all First Steps activities every day

### Hedgehogs

Noemie for the amazing story she made up using the story cards

### Reception

Darcey for working hard and engaging in all the week's activities

### Year 1

Keira for her impressive re-telling of Rapunzel and her fantastic Maths work on division



## Top tips for children's well-being

We all find ourselves facing new challenges during this period of self-isolation and social distancing and maintaining our wellbeing is one of them. To try to help with this, here are a few tips that you may find useful. Break your day up into chunks and try to stick as closely as possible to the school day. For example:

Breakfast and get dressed  
Work time  
Play time  
Lunch time  
Work time  
Play time  
Dinner time  
Screens off time  
Story and bed.



Try to keep to normal sleep patterns as adequate sleep is a key part to boosting mood and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

It is important to keep our bodies moving and even simple activities like dancing to a song or walking up and down the stairs every hour will make a difference to health and fitness. Staying hydrated and eating well are also crucial.

Please share your concerns and worries. While our physical doors are currently closed, we are very much still open and here to help so please contact us if you would like some advice or just to talk any concerns over. More advice and helpful tips are available on Cognita's website.  
**Ms Chantel Clayton**

## Mathletics News

Congratulations to Darcey Acott who has impressed by gaining a Silver and three Bronze Mathletics certificates since the end of March and to Aniya who has achieved two Bronze certificates.

## Weekly Recipe from Mrs T

Mrs T has been working her way through her freezer using up stored items.

She used this recipe in the week to rustle up a tasty Indian spiced shepherds pie. It is a low-fat super healthy meal for all the family that can be popped in the freezer or enjoyed on the day.

Instead of minced lamb you can always substitute with minced beef or quorn and add any frozen vegetables you may find tucked away in your freezer! It is an easy recipe the family can make together, and you can simply add less or more spice according to taste.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/indian-spiced-shepherds-pie>

*Inspiring Young Minds*