

# DOWNSEND PRE-PREP TIMES



Downsend School Pre-Prep Epsom  
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## Epsom

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April



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## Message from Mrs Conlan

## DEPA news

Thank you to everyone who has passed on such lovely messages to us through the last two weeks, but particularly this week as we have entered into the first week of online teaching and learning. The teachers have worked tirelessly all week to provide stimulating learning opportunities for the children, to feedback to them to keep them engaged and motivated and to improve what they are providing from day to day. I'm sure you'll join me in congratulating the teachers on adjusting so quickly to a brand new way of working and for being so flexible in their approach. Thank you also to parents who have provided constructive feedback to help us get better each day. We really are trying our very best in very challenging circumstances and now have the Easter break to regroup, finalise phases 2 and 3 of the online programme and be ready to launch again when we are back. We aim to be the best at getting better.

Please be assured that every member of staff would rather have the school building open and be teaching the children face to face

each day, carrying out the role we love. Seeing the work, photos and videos of the children through Seesaw has been incredibly inspiring this week and a huge driver in motivating us all to continue to improve. We know that online teaching and learning cannot mirror exactly what we are able to provide in the classroom, but in this new world we are committed to providing the same high quality through this new medium and trying to mirror as much as we can – this is how and why phase 2 and 3 of our implementations plan have been constructed.

As we move into the Easter break I wish everyone a safe and healthy few weeks. We will continue to communicate with you through the break keeping you updated on plans for next term as well as providing activities and pointers to activities you may want to try at home to keep our busy and active young people engaged. We look forward to 'seeing' everyone on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April for the start of the Summer term.

**Mrs Conlan**

DEPA began the Spring term with many plans to bring our community of families together and deliver exciting, fun experiences for our children.

This term our children enjoyed decorating Valentine's cookies and created beautiful Mother's Day gifts courtesy of DEPA, and we were delighted to be able to distribute Easter gifts to those children in school on the last day. Whilst we couldn't go ahead with our Auction night, we brought parents together with a DEPA Dad's night out and a social night, and we have supported the school's sustainability efforts with the launch of two new recycling schemes.

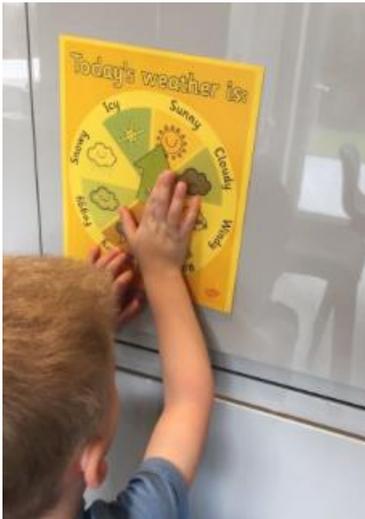
While we have ended this term in a very different place, we hope that some of the personal connections made through DEPA events and the class WhatsApp groups will provide support, friendship, and help to keep our children connected during these challenging times.

DEPA will continue to look at ways to bring our community together and support the school. In the meantime, we wish all of you good health over Easter and the coming weeks.



# Teaching and Learning in a Virtual World

Teaching through the medium of the computer may be alien to Early Years teachers, but the staff have embraced this challenge to find new ways to inspire the children in their daily voyages of discovery and learning this week. Thankfully the weather has been good and judging by the amazing work, impressive investigating and creative responses the children have had to the lessons that teachers have produced on Seesaw, they are continuing to learn and grow. While our older children are starting to embrace onscreen editing tools (see Nandini's super picture on the front page of the newsletter) and outdoor Maths and Science challenges, our younger children have collected, cut, stuck, explored, baked and much more. For all Early Year teachers, the highlight of the day has to be story time and while, so far, we have not been able to see the delight and wonder of the children responding to the stories as we tell them, the photos, videos and notes the children have posted (with your help) have been richly rewarding. The next few pages show a snapshot of your children's achievements this week. **Mrs Burns**



Colours by Sonia  
What is red? A poppy is red  
And it has very pretty petals  
What is orange? A satsuma is orange  
A satsuma is sweet  
What is yellow? A lemon is yellow  
Lemons are sour  
What is green? A apple is green  
And they are sweet  
What is blue? Sonia's coat is blue  
And my coat is smooth and soft  
What is purple? A butterfly is purple  
With very beautiful wings

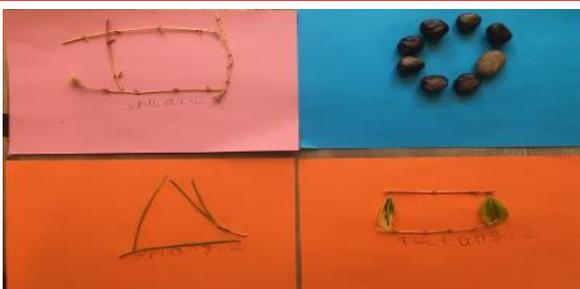


## Birthdays

Unfortunately, we missed celebrating some birthdays due to the school closure, so we would like to wish a belated Happy Birthday to Luke (First Steps) for the 23<sup>rd</sup> March and Aaron (Reception) for the 29<sup>th</sup> March.

Also we would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to those children who have birthdays coming over the Easter holidays

Jago (Reception) on 6<sup>th</sup> April  
Lauren (Reception) on 7<sup>th</sup> April  
Tahira (Y1) on 11<sup>th</sup> April  
Oliver (RR) on 17<sup>th</sup> April







## Easter Holiday Fun At Home

1. Play some favourite board games with your family.
2. Go online and download the 30 day Lego Challenge.
3. Bake bread, biscuits, cakes or cook a meal together.
4. Play I spy.
5. Create musical instruments from boxes or pans and sing some rhymes or make up your own show.
6. Create pictures on the patio using chalk or water and a paintbrush.
7. Do a family jigsaw together.
8. Make chalk drawings on the patio.
9. Go for a scoot, cycle or walk in a local open green area.
10. Make a camp in the garden or in a corner the house.
11. Wash your toys.
12. Make a calm jar using an old bottle. Fill it with water, food colouring and glitter.
13. Make a bird feeder by threading Cheerios or a similar cereal onto a pipe cleaner or string.
14. Make your own set of skittles by painting and numbering empty bottles or tin cans.
15. Create a nature box. Decorate an egg box using felt tips or paints. Go on a nature walk in the garden and put in the different things you find.



## 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

Samuel for joining in enthusiastically with Seesaw activities every day

### Hedgehogs

Oliver for great rhyming words

### Reception

Tommy for making a super basket for the Easter bunny

### Year 1

Sonia and Aiden for tackling all Seesaw activities with creativity and enthusiasm



## Top tips for children's well-being

It is very important to explain to your children that it is not only they who cannot go to school, but ALL their friends and the teachers. Everyone must stay at home to ensure they stay healthy, but this will not be forever. There is a very child friendly explanation about this in the You Tube film called 'Time to come in bear' [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DA\\_SsZFYw0w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DA_SsZFYw0w).

The advice is to maintain a routine during holidays, including taking a daily form of exercise, even if it is raining. Please see below further ideas to help maintain the children's well-being:

1. Learn a new skill eg to make your bed, wash up, ride a bike.
2. Sing a good song and make up a crazy dance routine.
3. Blow up a balloon and write any worries you have on it with a permanent marker pen and then let it off outside.
4. Make a card telling someone what they are good at doing.
5. Write a letter, or draw a picture, for an elderly relative, friend or neighbour who might be alone right now.
6. Create a paper chain out of paper strips and write and draw things that make you happy on each strip.
7. Make a worry monster out of a tissue or cereal box and post any worries through the monster's open mouth.
8. Make a happy face from things in the house and garden.
9. Plant some seeds to grow flowers or vegetables.
10. Read or tell a story to someone in your house using different voices to make the characters come to life.

**Miss Clayton**

## Mathletics News

Well done to Tahira and Diana for achieving Gold, Silver and Bronze Mathletics certificates this week! Congratulations also goes to: Ellie, Aniya, Sophie, Lauren, Darcey Henry and Keira for achieving Bronze certificates. Fantastic Mathletics! Mathletics certificates have been awarded up until 28<sup>th</sup> March and any earned after that will be awarded in the next newsletter.

## World Food Thursday from India



Why not recreate your very own World Food Day at home using inspiring culinary ideas from Mrs T?

On the left is a picture of Mrs T's popular Balti curry. The recipe for this and other delicious delights made by Mrs T and Miss Julie can be found in the attachment that accompanies this newsletter.

Perhaps you might even want the children to choose a letter themselves like they do at school and find recipes for a country starting with that letter? Please share your creations with us.

*Inspiring Young Minds*

