

# DOWNSEND PRE-PREP TIMES



Downsend School Pre-Prep Epsom  
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## Epsom

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020



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## Message from Mrs Conlan

As we head into our final week of the strangest half term I have ever had and ever hope to have, the tides are turning for us again. I fear next half term will be equally as strange but for slightly different reasons.

In our staff meeting this week, there was a unanimous outpouring of positivity and pride at the hard work and engagement of children and parents through the online teaching and learning programme and a recognition of routines being in place. We are still facing technical problems in pockets which we do understand is exceptionally frustrating and we can only thank you once again for your patience and understanding in this area.

Thinking forward to next half term, I would like to thank everyone who has already completed the short survey sent yesterday. We are deep into our action planning and risk assessing for the children to return to the school on 1<sup>st</sup> June and parent and staff views, alongside the Government guidance are key to us getting things right. Coming strongly through the survey is the need for further information from us about what the return to school will look like and some fears around what the actual experiences in school will look like for the children within the measures we will be taking. The health and safety of our children, parents and staff are the most important part of our planning and this includes mental health. The school that reopens on 1<sup>st</sup> June, or when we are given the go ahead, will be a very similar school to the one the children

left prior to lockdown with drop offs at the door, additional handwashing measures etc but there will also be additional measures around minimising contact as much as possible with children working in smaller groups in designated spaces, lots of time spent outdoors, windows and doors open, tight access and movement arrangements around the buildings also. It will not be the school the children are perhaps expecting to come back to. However, it will not be the sort of school that many of us will have seen on pictures where young children are limited to playing within a chalked square on the floor. For me, coming back to school for our children is coming back to meet their friends and their teachers, to be able to play, interact and socialise and we will ensure they can do this safely and within the guidance in place. When we return the priority for us will be the happiness and security of the children within the new measures. More information will follow on this next week in three areas – education programme/curriculum, Health and Safety measures and organisation of pupils.

Today is our theme day of thanks and gratitude and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support over the period since lockdown, but particularly since the start of this half term and the full launch of our online teaching and learning

programme. Both myself and the teachers have hugely appreciated your lovely messages of support and we were all incredibly pleased to see the recent parent survey results on the online teaching and learning programme reflect your positive messaging too – please see the figures attached to the end of this newsletter. Ideally we would have liked the response rate to be higher but we know how phenomenally busy everyone is so appreciate all responses that were made. There were no stand out themes, but as always we are continually reviewing our programme in light of ongoing conversations and feedback.

I hope everyone has a wonderful weekend.

**Mrs Vanessa Conlan**

## Thank You

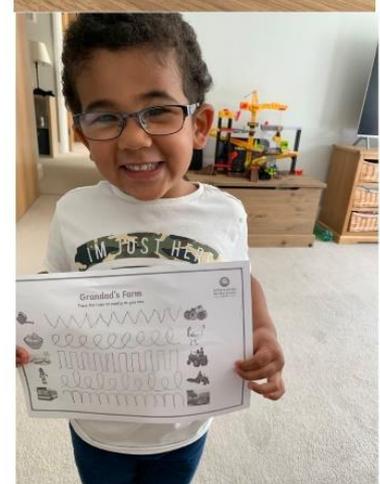
Our first themed Friday (Thanks and Gratitude) has brought smiles to the teachers faces and one or two tears to eyes too. Your children have been unbelievably thoughtful in sending the staff so many wonderful messages and pictures whilst also thinking of the keyworkers who are helping to keep us safe.

Special thanks go to Mrs Burbidge for planning so many wonderful activities for the children to do today. Please see the photo gallery later in the newsletter.

## Feedback and Progress

Telling children about their achievements and the next steps in their learning is a crucial part of teaching and in the online world our teachers are finding new ways to achieve that. This includes celebrating work with one another in face to face lessons, incorporating quizzes and using toys that 'make mistakes' to allow the children to share their knowledge and help us to plan for the children's continued progress. Verbal feedback is a key component of the wellbeing sessions in First Steps and Rising Reception and in Reception and Year 1 a mixture of personalised written and recorded feedback is also provided on Seesaw so the children and teachers remain connected in the learning process. Parent feedback is invaluable too so please let us know if your child needs help with tasks so we can continue to offer stimulating and fun learning experiences that help every child to achieve and progress. **Mrs Lisa Burns**

It has all been about The Farm this week in First Steps. We have been making farm animals, washing them, counting them, colour coding tractors and practicing our pencil skills. **Mrs Jane Simpson**

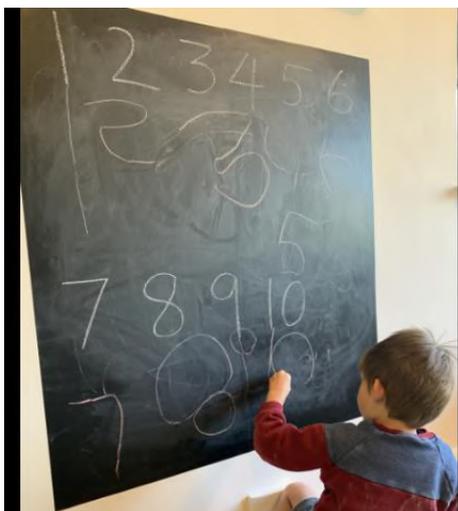


Once again this week I have been amazed at how much the children in Hedgehog class have learnt. They have discovered that a shape that has 5 sides and 5 corners is a pentagon and made their own Mr. Pentagons. As part of our topic the "Lifecycle of Butterfly" the children have learnt that the first thing a caterpillar usually eats is its own egg and that it spins a cocoon or a chrysalis around itself. They have made their own caterpillars and a delicious caterpillar sandwich to eat as well. Hedgehog Class have continued to explore rhyming words by making great rhyming sock puppets as well as learning their new phoneme sound Y this week! Fantastic work everyone I am very proud of you all.

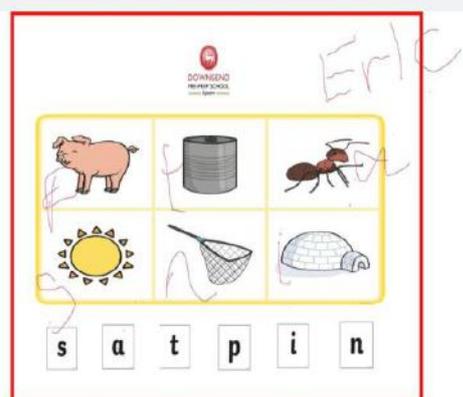
**Ms Chantael Clayton**



Ted wanted to give Mr Pentagon 5 arms/legs and was able to explain a pentagon had 5 sides and 5 corners



skylas  
yellow  
submarine



This week Reception has continued to impress us with their online learning. The children come online ready to learn and prepared with their writing books, pencils, number lines and counting objects. As well as the focused learning activities, it is lovely to see the videos on Seesaw of the children enjoying dance moves with Miss Terri-Jayne and Melody Bear, enthusiastically bashing leaves after visiting Forest School and learning songs with Mr Bayley. Well done Reception! **Mrs Sharon Butler**

Use a green colouring pencil to colour the boxes where the words contain 'e'.

beige	geese	cheese	leath	sheep
beize	geese	freeze	leath	sheep
cansten	wheel	freeze	leath	sheep
coffee	bee	leath	leath	leath

Sentences

Choose three words that are green and put each one in a sentence.

- I drank tea.
- I went to the beach.
- I saw a seagull at the beach.

Learning Ladybird: I can add together numbers up to 20 and add by counting on.

6 + 3 = 9    2 + 8 = 10    5 + 4 = 9    7 + 2 = 9

16 + 3 = 19    12 + 8 = 20    15 + 4 = 19    17 + 2 = 19

17 + 0 = 17    11 + 8 = 19    12 + 3 = 15    5 + 15 = 20

Can you add on?

13 → Add 1 → 14

12 → Add 2 → 14

18 → Add 2 → 20

15 → Add 5 → 20

Picture 2

Rosie :-  
I am hungry now.  
I can't wait for dinner.

Fox :-  
HELP! I don't want to be stung by these bees.



5 + 2 + 3 = 10    6 + 3 + 1 = 10

10

5    2    3

10

6    3    1



'All things bright and beautiful' could have been the theme of this week in Year 1. Following on from the VE Day weekend celebrations, the children learned about a wide variety of flora and fauna in Science and Geography. This included exploring the local area for trees and their leaves, discovering and writing facts about the animals that live (largely hidden) in the desert, producing incredible Art through drawings and collage, learning to use speech marks to bring story writing to life and developing their knowledge of the time in Maths. Rest and rejuvenation came in the form of Mrs Burbidge's weekly meditation session and our story times which are a highlight of the day for us all. **Mrs Lisa Burns**



Sidewinder  
Rattlesnake

Sidewinder Rattlesnake is found in African desert. They are the fastest snake on sand. They have a scaly rattle at the end of their tail. It crawls sideways and big eyes and two humps on its head. It feeds on lizards, mice and rats found in deserts.



cheetah

Cheetahs live in Africa and they are the fastest animal on land. Cheetahs don't roar like a lion but instead they purr like a cat. They are carnivores and only eat meat by hunting other animals. It runs up to 70 mph speed.



Kangaroo Rat

A Kangaroo Rat is found west and south west America. It is nocturnal and comes out at night. The Kangaroo Rat never needs to drink water even though it eats dry seeds. Kangaroo Rat has excellent hearing and can hear a silent owl approaching. It can jump more than 2 and half metres.



# VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Our attempt at making 'Rock Cake'



## National Story Month



Mrs Conlan's Friday story, 'Have You Filled A Bucket Today' was in keeping with our Friday 'Thanks and Gratitude' theme. It's message reminds us that 'our buckets' hold our good thoughts and feelings and every time we do a good thing for someone else, we fill our own and their buckets thus making the world a better place.

The theme of this month's National Story Telling month is 'The Planet We Share'. Here is a selection of books on this theme and which are suitable for young children:

- Welcome** by Barroux Egmont: Polar Bears attempting to find a welcoming home as their ice shrinks
- Charlie and Lola: Look after your Planet** by Lauren Child: A gentle introduction to the idea of recycling
- The Promise** by Nicola Davies. About the power we have to transform our world
- It's Your World Now** by Barry Falls. A journey through the adventures of life, told in rhyme, celebrating the potential of each child.
- Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish** by Michael Foreman. Classic environmental tale.
- One World: Our Chance to Save the Planet** by Michael Foreman. This beautiful classic is 30 years old now
- Tidy** by Emily Gravett. Can you ever be too tidy?
- Elephant in my Kitchen** by Smriti Halls. A lovely introduction to some of the 'big issues' facing us today.
- The Great Big Book of Families** by Mary Hoffman. Depictions of all sorts of family make-up.
- Sally and the Limpet** by Simon James About a little girl who learns an environmental lesson.
- My Hair** by Hannah Lee. Debut author and illustrator using hair styles to show difference and similarity between people in a girl's search for the best party hair style!
- The Tale of a Toothbrush** by M G Leonard. The story of what happens to a toothbrush – you are never too young to start thinking about environmental impacts of your actions.
- Where my Wellies Take Me** by Claire and Michael Morpurgo. Part poetry, part scrapbook – a walk in the country.
- Lily and the Polar Bears** by Jon Sheibani. A topical picture book touching on the environment and immigration – and how to be welcoming.



## 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

Luke for his wonderful good morning every day, his super cardboard car garage and for showing us all how to have fun in the sun!

### Hedgehogs

Ryan Howes for making two great rhyming sock puppets and Rupert for working hard all week and giving a great explanation of the butterfly lifecycle

### Reception

Jago for his fabulous reading

### Year 1

Arjun and Nandini for their super writing about desert animals



## Top tips for children's well-being



### Cognita Home Games

Sport and being active is such a key part of our wellbeing, which is especially important in these difficult times. Some of you may have been training for the upcoming **Cognita Home Olympics**. We would love if you could join in the fun next week from 18<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Some events in the EYFS & Y1 group include Frog Jumps, Star Jumps, Pillow Balances and Sock Claps. Please see the attached event guide and further details with follow on Monday.

**Poetry** – is a wonderful mindfulness tool (for children and adults) and is a great way to stay focused in the present moment. Even if you are not confident with writing poetry, reading and listening to poetry is just as beneficial. It forces you to slow down and pay close attention to the words and quietens any racing thoughts in your mind. There are plenty of poetry titles available on apps such as Audible. It can also be a nice way to drift off to sleep and let the words take you off to another place. We have included a lovely poem at the end of the newsletter this week that you may enjoy.

**Art & Culture** – one of the things many of you will be missing is being able to visit your favourite art gallery or museum. There are lots of galleries and museums that have collections available online, such as the British Museum or National Gallery. Google Arts <https://artsandculture.google.com/> is a great place to start and find somewhere you would like to visit. Tate Gallery has a great kids website <https://www.tate.org.uk/kids> exploring artworks and lots of fun activities. Exploring online exhibitions is a great way to travel 'virtually' to far off places and best of all, avoid any crowds!  
**Ms Chantael Clayton**

## Mathletics & Pobble News

Congratulations to Ellie for Silver and Bronze from last week, sorry your name was missed! For this week congratulations to Sonia for Silver and Bronze and Darcey and Keira for Bronze. Well done to Jack, Arjun, Nandini and Sonia for being this this week's Pobble published authors.

## Weekly Recipe from Mrs T

Why not recreate one of the children's favourites from our lunch menu, cauliflower cheese. It is always very popular with the children (and staff!) when Mrs T makes it. The perfect comfort food! <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/cauliflower-cheese-0>

*Inspiring Young Minds*

# The Most Beautiful Flower

by Cheryl L Costello Forshey



The park bench was deserted as I sat down to read,  
Beneath the long, straggly branches of an old willow tree,  
Disillusioned by life with good reason to frown,  
For the world was intent on dragging me down,

And if that weren't to ruin my day,  
A young boy out of breath approached me, all tired from play,  
He stood right before me with his head tilted down,  
And said with great excitement, "Look what I found!"

In his hand was a flower, and what a pitiful sight,  
With its petal worn-not enough rain, or too little light,  
Wanting him to take his dead flower and go off to play,  
I faked a smile and then shifted away,

But instead of retreating he sat next to my side,  
And placed the flower to his nose and declared with overacted surprise,  
"It sure smells pretty and it's beautiful too,  
That's why I picked it; here, it's for you,"

The weed before me was dying or dead,  
Not vibrant of colours, orange yellow or red,  
But I knew I must take it, or he might never leave,  
So I reached for the flower, and replied, "Just what I need,"

But instead of him placing the flower in my hand,  
He held it midair without reason or plan,  
It was then that I noticed for the very first time,  
That weed-toting boy could not see: he was blind,

I heard my voice quaver, tears shone like the sun,  
As I thanked him for picking the very best one,  
"You're welcome," he smiled, and then ran off to play,  
Unaware of the impact he'd had on my day,

I sat there and wondered how he managed to see,  
A self-pitying girl teenager beneath an old willow tree,  
How did he know of my self-indulged plight?  
Perhaps from his heart, he'd been blessed with true sight,

Through the eyes of a blind child, at last I could see,  
The problem wasn't the world; the problem was me,  
And for all of those times I myself had been blind,  
I vowed to see the beauty in life, and appreciate every second that's mine,

And then I held that wilted flower up to my nose,  
And breathed in the fragrance of a beautiful rose,  
And smiled as I watched that young boy, another weed in his hand,  
About to change the lives of an unsuspecting young couple!

## Parent Feedback (% who agree/strongly agree)

Number of Responses

16

Response Rate

37%

School Day Well Structured

100%

Adequate Technological Support

87.5%

School is doing a good job of providing T+L

100%

Teacher aware of Student Wellbeing

93.8%