

# DOWNSEND PRE-PREP TIMES



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

## Epsom

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020



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

## Message from Mrs Conlan

## Animal Magic

Thank you to everyone for another fabulous week. I don't want to say it, but it does finally feel like we may be settling into some kind of routine... just in time for an announcement of changes to (maybe/hopefully) come this weekend! Whatever the weekend brings, please rest assured that we will listen, plan and adapt to what we are presented with. According to what the news brings will make a difference to how quickly we are able to share our plans with you. I have already written a return to school plan taking into consideration all the different factors we may need to think about so we are ready and prepared for what the weekend brings! I would hope to share our initial thoughts and reactions with you on Monday and then follow that up with more robust information later in the week once I have had time to discuss planning with the other Downsend Headteachers and also received information from Cognita. Personally, I await the news with feelings of optimism, fear, trepidation and many, many different feelings in between! We would love to have all the children back in school with us, but first and foremost we want everyone to stay safe. I am certain that if we are given the go ahead to return to school after the half term there will be many additional stipulations in place and Health and Safety measures similar to before the closure will be necessary. We wait to see.

Next Friday is the first of our theme days focussed on thanks and gratitude. Additional information has already come out about the day to give you some

insight in advance as to how it will look, but we hope it will be a day to both enrich the curriculum but also to have a day with far less screen time. Having a 4 and 8 year old at home and being a diligent (and struggling) parent with maintaining home schooling, screen time does worry me and a day with more time away from it does appeal to me. There are enough activities provided for the day so that the 'normal' daily timetable can still be followed to reduce disruption, but there will be no teacher face to face sessions that day. 1:1 reading for Reception and Year 1 and some well-being sessions will continue as normal – please refer to your child's timetable for specifics for your class.

We have a long weekend with the VE Bank Holiday tomorrow and both Friday and Saturday promising to be good garden days. Please do take a look at the VE day assembly and family activities we have put up on Seesaw for you all if you would like/need something to keep you all busy. The day will be a wonderful opportunity for children and families together to reflect on a very significant time in British and World history and to have fun with creative, decorating, cooking and dance activities. We would love to see any family or socially distanced community activities and to share them in next week's newsletter so please send any photos into Mrs Tucker at [epsompre-prep@downsend.co.uk](mailto:epsompre-prep@downsend.co.uk) Have a great weekend and see you next week.

This week is Hedgehog Awareness Week and the campaign organised by British Hedgehog Preservation Society encourages us all to be more aware that this much loved British wild animal is in danger from human activity. Not only are thousands killed on the roads every year, but our gardens can present dangers from the lawn mower and use of pesticides. Homes up and down the country are being encouraged to check compost heaps before turning them with a fork, to create log piles and to cut 13cm square holes in the bottom of fences to give these tiny animals a safe habitat and the ability to travel from garden to garden.

Since lockdown and fewer trains, planes and automobiles in use, the world has become a quieter place almost overnight. As a result, sightings of wild animals in unusual places is on the increase. Mrs Tucker read recently about a goose who has laid her eggs inside a railway station building because there is no one around to disturb her. A herd of deer have also been spotted grazing on lawns on an East London housing estate.

Have you spotted any wild or exotic creatures in unusual places? Perhaps a hedgehog has taken up residence in your garden? If so, please send your photos to Mrs Tucker for next week's newsletter.



# A special message...

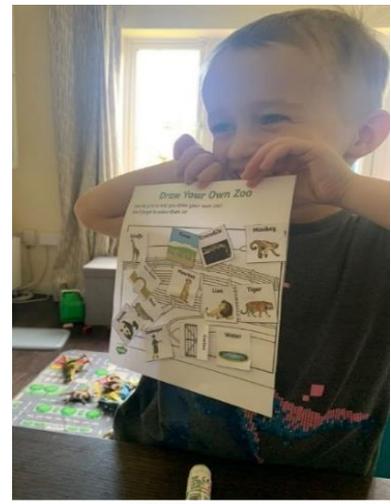
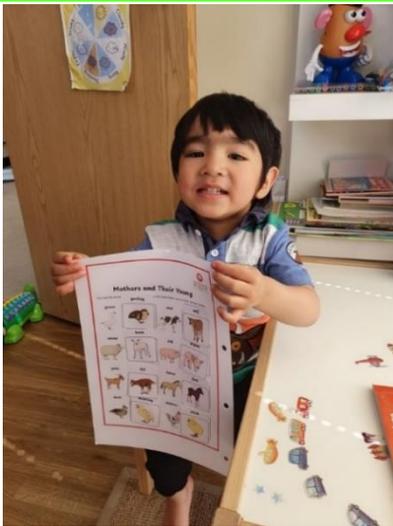


# Enriching Experiences

This week I have been lucky enough to go on a whistle stop tour of our school Seesaw accounts and I have been blown away by the stunning range of learning experiences that the children have been having at home. Finding ever more ingenious ways to engage our little ones through role play, puppetry, songs, films and good old fashioned imagination may be the hooks we use to teach, but at the heart of it the teachers are working to ensure the children continue to enjoy their learning and make good progress. And if my trip through Seesaw is anything to go by, the children's creative and inventive responses to their teachers' stimuli show that they are engaging brilliantly. This is richly rewarding for the staff and our heartfelt thanks goes out to parents for continuing to support your children to enable them take part in face to face teaching and wellbeing sessions and the Seesaw lessons. **Mrs Lisa Burns**

First Steps have been learning all about Jungle Animals this week. We have been counting and sorting animals, guessing pictures of jungle animals using an I spy PowerPoint, singing rhymes, dancing to The Jungle Book, making our own zoo and retelling the story Dear Zoo using stick puppets.

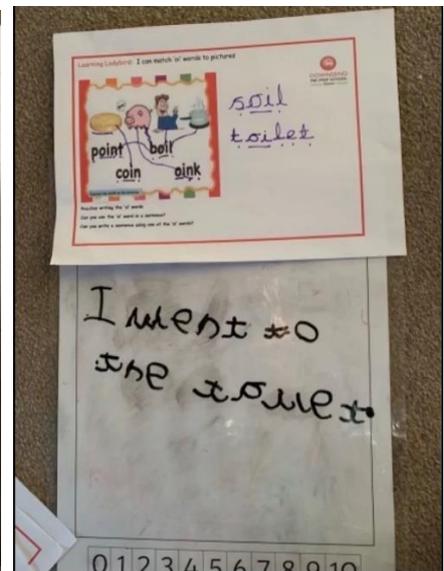
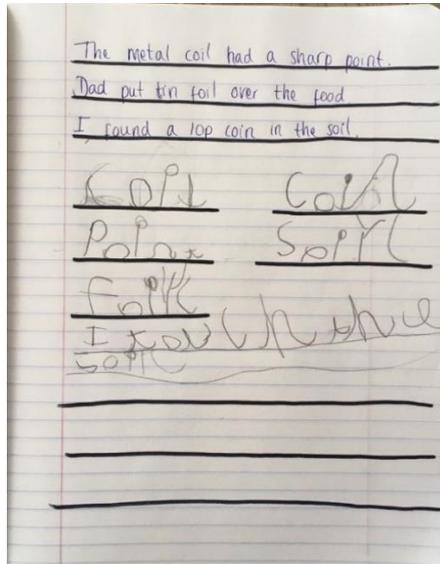
**Mrs Jane Simpson**



What another amazing week we have had in Rising Reception. The children started the week off learning their new phoneme sound X and instantly became pirates hiding treasure and marking it with an X to mark the spot. They have practiced counting and played a building game using a dice. They have had a minibeast quiz, built a bug hotel and made a peg spider. I have been constantly impressed with how hard everyone is working at home. Well done Hedgehog Class! **Ms Chantael Clayton**



In Maths the children have been problem solving by sharing objects into equal groups and learning what to do if the number of objects is not equal. They thoroughly enjoyed Mr Bristow's Forest School and some children made lovely save the heroes medals. They also loved Mrs Bullock's cooking lesson and had fun making dinosaur masks to fit in with our topic on dinosaurs. In Music, the children have learned some new songs with Mr Bayley and they went on a garden minibeast hunt during Madame Murray's French lesson. Thank you for the super messages that the children have left for the teachers this week. **Mrs Sharon Butler**



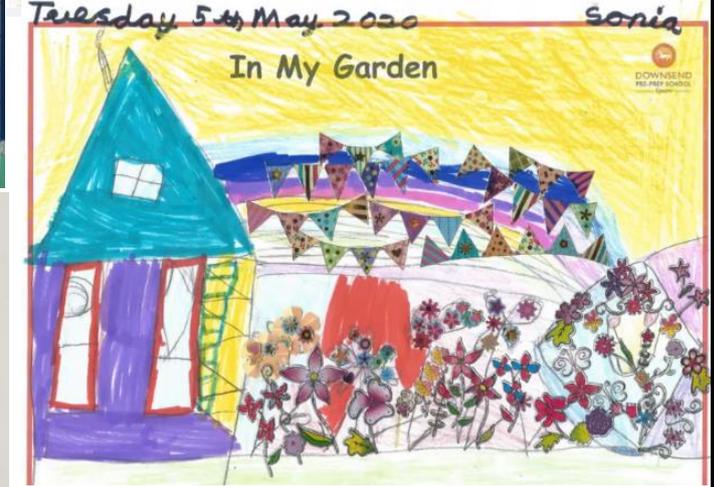
This week, Year 1 has been coming to grips with telling the time and learning how to write informal letters. The children not only impressed me at the start of the week with their super letters about their weekend news, but showed oodles of imagination later on by pretending to be the prince in the story of Rapunzel and writing wonderful letters to the trapped damsel to describe their enchanting castles in vivid detail. Inspired by our Science topic on plants, the children are growing and tending sunflowers at home. This week they explored their gardens for spring flowers, ventured into the desert to find out how plants there have adapted to the harsh environment and produced some super drawings of sunflowers based upon Van Gogh's famous 'Sunflowers' painting. **Mrs Lisa Burns**

Big castle  
Near Forest  
Fairy Tale land  
6.5.20

Dear Rapunzel

Thank you for your letter. My castle is huge with big towers, there is a moat with fish made out of gold that swim in it. Behind the castle I have a garden that is the size of a park and the castle can fly. It has a maze that turns so I am always getting lost in it. There are five rainbow sparkly birds in my garden. What is your robin called? Would you like to visit my castle one day?

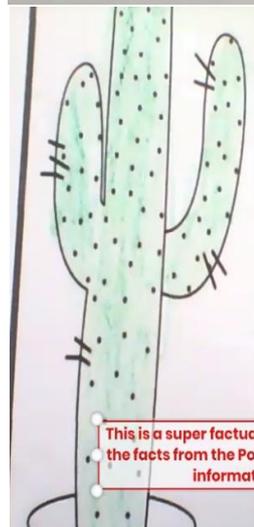
From Prince



## Friday story



Mrs Conlan's Friday story (but read on a Thursday this week!) was Edward Lear's 'The Quangle Wangle's Hat'. It is a delightfully silly nonsense story that is full of rhyme and plays with language so magically that it continues to amuse children as much today as it did when written more than 140 years ago.



Cacti are green plants that have thick, waxy skin. They have large, fleshy stems and spines covering their bodies. Cacti have shallow, wide roots that sit just below the ground. Cacti have many small, thin roots that help them absorb water from the soil.



This is a super factual account about cacti Tahira. You have used the facts from the Powerpoint and I spotted that you remembered information from the film too. Great work.

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



This Friday the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe will be marked across the nation and perhaps the relevance of peace and liberty has never been more relevant since then until recently. While social gatherings are not possible, we have uploaded resources to Seesaw to help the children understand the significance of VE Day and some ideas and activities to do together at home. These include a family 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire Quiz', make your own bunting, have a tea party, make a spitfire plane, design your own medal, have a celebration jive. There is a rock cake recipe included in the Seesaw resources or see Mrs T's recipe corner for some more ideas for your tea party! We would love to hear how you celebrate on 8<sup>th</sup> May, please email any photos to Mrs Tucker.

## Indoor ideas

We have loved hearing your ideas for entertaining the children whilst indoors! Some ideas included incorporating a treasure hunt into a game of hide and seek. It also means mum or dad have longer to hide away somewhere while the children try and find them (about enough time for a quick cup of coffee while you wait!)

Or how about a 'sliding plate' game? One family draws lines on the wooden floors in the hallway (each line increases in value). By pushing the plates across the floor you can see who scores the highest. Great for number recognition too (and mum reassures us the chalk rubs away easily after finishing). Some of you have been busy with puzzles too with your families, well done!



## The Tiny Tadpole



By Downsens Epsom Pre-Prep

## Last orders for The Tiny Tadpole

There is still time order a copy of 'The Tiny Tadpole' which is the book written and illustrated by Epsom Pre-Prep children just before the school closure. If you would like to order a copy priced at approximately £7 (the final cost will be dependent upon the number of orders received), then please email Mrs Tucker.

## 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

Sebastian for his wonderful rendition of the story Dear Zoo using the stick puppets that went along with the activity

### Hedgehogs

Carter for working so hard on his phonics and Keegan for making an amazing wooden medal

### Reception

Victoria for being so engaged with her online learning

### Year 1

Keira for super informative and imaginative letter writing



## Top tips for parents' well-being



As parents we instinctively focus on our family's wellbeing before that of our own. In this current climate it is more important than ever that you look after yourselves and try to find a balance where you can allow yourself a little time too. Trying to manage stress levels is the key. Staying fit, healthy and having a good night's sleep will help.

Remember to be kind to yourself. All of our working environments have changed dramatically so try to accept what you can do and don't worry about what you can't, everyone is doing their best. Treat yourself too. In this ever increasing digital world, it is good to get off the screens for a while and enjoy a walk by yourself, a long uninterrupted bath, read a book, do a puzzle or just be quiet and still for a while, whatever works for you. Remember you can't take care of others unless you take care of yourself.

**Ms Chantael Clayton**

## Mathletics & Pobble News

Congratulations to Jack, Aniya, Elodie, Darcey and Sonia for achieving Bronze Mathletics awards. Well done to Aiden, Sonia, Tahira and Keira for being this week's Pobble published authors.

**Parent Survey** We would now like to invite you to complete a short survey via this [link](#), open until 5pm on Friday, so that we can collect your views and perspective on the online learning process more formally and to build any identified areas into our action plan for continuous improvement. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the survey.

## Weekly Recipe from Mrs T

All the family can join in making some cakes or scones and celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE by having their own tea party.

Here is a delicious scone recipe

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/tea\\_time\\_scones\\_77839](https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/tea_time_scones_77839)

No flour? No problem, you could try a flour free cake recipe instead!

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/gluten-free-lemon-drizzle-cake>

*Inspiring Young Minds*