



22nd July 2026

Dear parent/carers,

As we approach the final weeks of the academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our entire community for supporting our young people to succeed at Downlands. It has been a privilege to lead the school this year. As ever, there have been challenges, not least the recent extreme heat, but Downlands is renowned for its strong sense of community and the way we come together to support one another. This was no exception, and it reflected our vision for everyone to feel safe, supported and successful.

The exam season has now drawn to a close. A huge thank you to everyone who supported our Year 11 students through this demanding period, our exceptional exams team, staff, parents and carers, and of course the students themselves, who showed remarkable resilience and self-awareness in performing at their very best. It was a pleasure to celebrate their time with us at the Leavers' Assembly and at their prom at Pangdean.

On Transition Day, we welcomed our new Year 7 cohort. They enjoyed a series of taster lessons and returned in the evening with their families, joining us as we welcomed them into our Downlands community. Their optimism and excitement were wonderful to see.

Despite the extreme heat, there was a tremendous community effort in the build-up to the Summer Fair. Hassocks Football Club joined us for a football tournament, helping to create a truly community-wide event. Other highlights included dance performances and the highly anticipated Downlands Got Talent competition, featuring everything from drum solos to magic tricks. It was a joyful celebration of creativity and teamwork.

Downlands led the Federation Dance Show at the Chequer Mead Theatre in East Grinstead, performing to a sell-out audience from across the federation and local area. As ever, the performances were exceptional and attracted well-deserved praise.

Year 9 students took part in excursions to France, including visits to the Somme and the Opal Coast, as part of their Character Passport. For some, this was their first trip abroad and an opportunity to build resilience, independence and global awareness.

Unfortunately, due to the recent extreme weather, the Art and Photography Exhibition has been postponed. However, we look forward to showcasing our students' fabulous work on an online digital platform in September.

This month we held our annual PE and Dance Awards, celebrating an incredible year of sport and performance. We were delighted to be joined by Vic Bragg, who for many years served as the Youth Development Officer at Brighton & Hove Albion and worked with many of the club's current first-team players.

Our annual Netball Marathon took place this half term, raising awareness and funds for Breast Cancer Now. The event was launched by a mixed staff team, "I was never offside!" followed by cake sales and a tombola. At the time of writing, we have raised in excess of £2,000. Thank you all for such an uplifting act of community and kindness.

As we reach the end of the academic year, we sadly say goodbye to a number of staff. We wish them well in their retirement or new roles and thank them sincerely for the contributions they have made to our community.

Wishing you all a wonderful summer break.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M Ashdown".

Mr M. Ashdown
Headteacher

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NETBALL MARATHON

DOWNLANDS NETBALL MARATHON



RAISING MONEY FOR

**BREAST
CANCER
NOW**
The research
& care charity

*Thank
you!*

Friday the 3rd July saw our annual netball marathon raising money for Breast Cancer Now—a charity so close to the Downlands community. With over 200 students and staff participating, over 300 goals scored and the sun shining upon us, our target of £2500 has been smashed. We have managed to raise over £3000, and some donations are still coming in! At break and lunch we held a Wolstonbury and South Downs community cake sale alongside the sweet tombola! A team of year 10 students helped with umpiring, organising and playing the whole day – A BIG thank you to you all! Teams of staff provided some entertaining netball at 8am where the crowds of students were able to watch some interesting netball!

All in all, it was fantastic to organise and exceed our target. A big thanks to everyone who helped in any way be that baking, playing, buying raffle tickets to win sweets or just donating!

Thanks again, Mrs Shah



STEM

STEM OUTREACH

Over the last half term, Mr Urwin and I took our delightful STEM ambassadors from Y8-10 on some primary school visits to Ditchling, Windmills, and St Lawrence. The idea was to introduce fun science to the Year 6 students most of who will be part of the Downlands Community from September. The Downlands ambassadors were passionate and enthusiastic with all the experiments, engaging the students with fun and excitement. The feedback from all three schools was extremely positive and they can't wait to have us again next year! Well done STEM team!

Mrs Shah

STEMTRIP

FUTURE FIELDS STEM TRIP TO PLUMPTON COLLEGE.

For my final trip as STEM coordinator we went along for a day filled with exciting activities. We learnt many things about Blacksmithing and all the links with our scientific and creative knowledge.



We learnt how to detect the purity of water by observing the creatures within our sample and why just using fish is not a good indicator.



We went on a moss safari; however, we did not find the illusive tardigrade.



We enjoyed getting a little muddy during our soil science session.



The ultimate session was making very tasty bread sticks with amazing chefs. Also just having fun!



I want to thank all the current and previous students for their enthusiasm throughout all our activities and adventures, as well as all the companies that have given time to support our students with ideas, knowledge and inspiration. Also, thank you, to parents and carers who have supported your young people with their engagement with STEM club.

Ms Colvert.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

D OF E EXPEDITIONS 2026

This year, 104 Y10 students endured two very different expeditions.

The practice took place in early May. Meeting at Devil's Dyke on a grey Saturday morning, all went well for most of the day. Working with an instructor, all groups made good time and were arriving at the campsite from 3pm onwards. Unfortunately for them, that's when it started to rain. Hard!

However, like the amazing group they are, tents were struck anyway, some good, some not so good. But what was really amazing is that they all did this, without complaint.

Soon after, the rain relented for a while and evening meals were cooked. Not long after, it was lights out and the camp was silent by 10pm.

The following day was less eventful, and all groups returned to Devil's Dyke in really good time, without instructors, with one eye already on the assessed expedition in June.

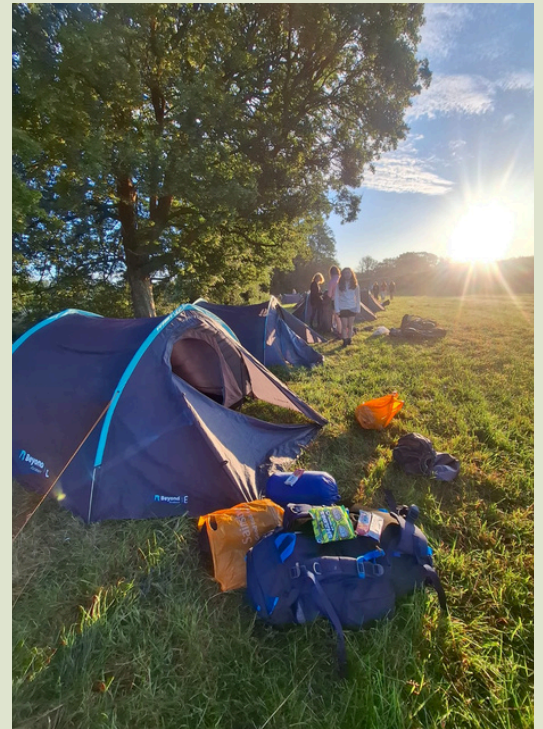


The assessed expedition took place on a very hot mid-June weekend. The start however was anything but hot; a cold, wet and misty morning at Ditchling Beacon.

Things soon warmed up though and all groups navigated their way to our camp near Barcombe Mills. The first groups arrived around 4pm. The last group arrived after 6pm, but were happy with their day's walking. After all, it's not a race and they were brilliant.

A medical incident early evening was handled with care and professionalism by all staff concerned and the students were, again, brilliant with their thoughtfulness during this. The afternoon and evening were very warm and the forecast for the next day was for very hot conditions. So, it was decided to let all the pupils know they were going to be up at 5am, to make an early start and early finish to day 2. The groans could be heard miles away!

All groups were up, packed and off the campsite by 6.45am for which they deserve huge credit. It proved to be a good decision as conditions were indeed very hot and energy sapping by mid-morning.



The route was adjusted (shortened) to allow for the weather and, by 1pm, all groups had completed the expedition and were on their way home to cool showers/baths and 'proper' food.

An exceptional group of young people did exceptionally well in two very different expeditions. All passed the expedition section of their award and were a credit to the school, their parents and carers, and themselves.

My thanks to them, and all those who supported me and their children on an amazing DofE Summer.
Mr Tilly

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

D OF E EXPEDITION - A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

Taking part in both the practice and assessed D of E expeditions was a challenging but incredibly rewarding experience. The practice expedition tested us with heavy rain just before arriving at the campsite, while the assessed expedition brought very hot conditions, and throughout both weekends we had to cope with heavy backpacks and plenty of blisters. Despite this, the experience was made enjoyable by the amazing scenery, the atmosphere at the campsite and spending time with friends, especially evenings spent toasting marshmallows, playing games and relaxing together after a long day of walking. During the practice expedition, our group was also accompanied by a dog called Romeo, who kept morale high and became a memorable part of the weekend. Although we got quite lost on the first expedition, we worked together to overcome difficulties and learned how important teamwork, communication and motivation are when people are tired and struggling. I also improved my resilience, navigation skills, independence and cooking skills, particularly when making pitta pizzas with soup and s'mores for pudding at the campsite.



One of the most useful things I learned was how to orientate a map properly and use it to navigate our route, as well as practical skills such as putting up a tent quickly and efficiently. I began the expeditions feeling excited, found the middle stages long and challenging, and finished feeling a huge sense of relief and achievement. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed camping and by how many funny memories I made with my friends.

I would definitely recommend D of E to other students, although they should be prepared for it to be hard work mentally and physically at times.



Sophie



DIVERSITY

DIVERSITY COOK AND EAT CELEBRATION

The Diversity Ambassadors invited other students to sign up and come along for an exciting session. The Ambassadors had chosen 5 different dishes from around the world to teach.



This took much preparation and a lot of shopping! All the students showed great enthusiasm and were very skilled at both teaching and learning the recipes.



We even enjoyed cleaning up!!



There was a great buzz in the room when it came to plating up and finally having the chance to eat the glorious feast they had made.

DOWNLANDS COOK BOOK

We are going to create a 'Downlands Around the World' Cook Book.

We would love to have your family recipes to add to this and maybe a photo too.

Please email hcolvert@downlands.org with your amazing dishes so we can try them.

YEAR 9 CHARACTER PASSPORT TRIP

TRIP TO FRANCE AND THE SOMME

On 12th–13th June, 200 Year 9 students and 25 members of staff embarked on our latest Character Passport adventure, travelling to either the beautiful Opal Coast in France or the historic battlefields of the Somme.

Students exploring the Opal Coast enjoyed a varied and engaging itinerary. Highlights included visiting a traditional snail farm, discovering the secrets of chocolate-making at a local factory, experiencing the vibrant atmosphere of Le Touquet Farmers Market and exploring the fascinating marine life at Nausicaá Aquarium.

Meanwhile, the Somme group took part in a moving journey through history. Students visited the impressive Vimy Ridge Memorial, toured the underground passages at Carrière Wellington, reflected at the vast Lochnagar Crater, and learned more about the First World War through visits to the Musée Somme and Thiepval Memorial.

Although the trip began with a very early 3am meeting time, students approached the challenge with remarkable enthusiasm, resilience and positivity throughout. They embraced every opportunity, engaged thoughtfully with the experiences on offer and represented the school exceptionally well.

Staff were immensely proud of the conduct, curiosity and character shown by all involved. The students were a genuine pleasure to spend time with, making this year's Character Passport trip another memorable and successful experience for everyone.



YEAR 7 MONSTERS

Students have designed, sculpted, and painted their ceramic monster artworks, experimenting with a range of techniques to achieve fantastic results.

Inspired by artists such as Keith Haring and Pete Fowler, as well as their own imaginations and fears, they have created unique and expressive ceramic monsters.



PHOTO OF THE MONTH



PHOTO OF THE MONTH
WINNER
ALFIE 8IL



PHOTO OF THE MONTH RUNNER UP
IDA 7RH

Submit your entries by the 1st of each month to chamblywalker@downlands.org
Max 2 entries per person per month

THANK YOU FROM THE DT DEPARTMENT



Our technology department would like to thank local company Cutmy for their continued support and for offering two of our students work experience placements in their marketing department. The materials that Cutmy generously donate help foster creativity across all year groups in the Art, Textile and Science departments. Special thanks to Erica Sheward for her support and to Tom for always popping up to help.

Donations of materials suitable for art & design, technology and photography are always gratefully accepted.

CREATIVE ARTS

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS YOUNG ARTISTS' SUMMER SHOW

We are delighted to announce that three of our talented art students have been accepted into the prestigious Royal Academy of Arts Young Artists' Summer Show.

Maisie (Year 7) and Olive (Year 8) have both had their artwork selected for the online exhibition, showcasing their creativity alongside young artists from across the country.

Extra congratulations go to Betty (Year 8), whose artwork has been selected for both the online exhibition and the gallery exhibition – a fantastic achievement.

We are incredibly proud of all three students for this outstanding success and look forward to seeing their artistic talents continue to flourish.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

RA

Young
Artists'
Summer
Show

Dragonfly

Betty, Age 13

Model

400(w) 213(h) 100(d) mm

For the 3D model, I used a range of materials to create different effects, such as fabric, wire and beads. Finally, I added a bell at the end of the tail to make the work interactive!



Flicker of Death

Olive, Age 12

Drawing

Oil pastel and white pencil

A4 portrait

A burning flame of many colours illuminates skeletons dancing in the dark.

Sweet Dreams

Maisie, Age 11

Painting

Acrylic on paper

182(w) 210(h) 0(d) mm

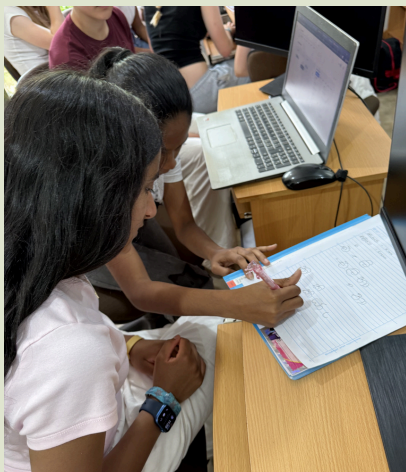
If you ever want to find me, just follow the trail of paint and cat fur. My two greatest passions in life are art and cats. My kittens, Meg and Mog, are lively, delightful sisters, and in this painting, I've tried to capture a moment of calm and the special bond they share.



NETBALL & RUGBY TOUR - SRI LANKA



During May half term, 57 Year 8 and 9 students embarked on their sports tour to Sri Lanka. The tour was primarily to play both netball and rugby, but also to provide the opportunity for our students to see life in another country with a different religion and culture. The Year 9A and 8A netball teams were undefeated for all of their games, with some close games by both B teams. The rugby teams played some exciting games against some tough opposition with some fantastic rugby being displayed.



NETBALL & RUGBY TOUR - SRI LANKA

As part of the tour, we were able to visit some big landmarks in Sri Lanka including the Gangaramaya Temple, Temple of the Tooth Relic and the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Dambulla Cave Temple. These were extraordinary places where our students were able to see and learn about the Buddhist culture and religion. We were also able to visit a spice garden and tea factory and learn how spices and tea that we use every day, are grown and produced ready for consumption. We stopped at a turtle hatchery where we saw many turtle hatchlings and an albino turtle. These turtles are extremely rare, with a 1 in 100000 chance of seeing these in the wild.

A big highlight for us all was our game drive in open top jeeps, to Minneriya National Park. We had some amazing encounters with elephants of all ages, with the youngest only a few days old! It was a very early start but everyone embraced this opportunity and thoroughly enjoyed this once in a lifetime experience. We saw wild grass snakes, peacocks roaming free along with eagles flying over us!



We visited a child action centre in Columbo where we were able to interact with pre-school children, play games, sing songs, read stories and do arts and crafts with them. Our students loved working with these children. A few days later we went to the Foundation of Goodness flagship centre where we had the opportunity to actually meet the founder who originally fled the centre with a van full of children to rescue them from the tsunami that hit them in 2004. His story had many of our students feeling very emotional and grateful for what they have. The centre is one of many that provides a safe environment for women and girls, pre-school children from underprivileged areas, a special needs unit for children and adults, an education centre to teach basic IT skills for young adults, a skills centre for women who want to learn a new skill to earn their own money, and also a free dental service for those who cannot access this otherwise. We were taken to their incredible sports facility for lunch, where we were able to see the actions of charitable work. Many famous sports men and women visit this centre or centres across Sri Lanka and support the foundation to achieve their fundraising to provide this safe space for so many people.

This trip created some fantastic memories for each and every person that went on the trip, not only from a sporting aspect but also cultural. It opened many eyes to see what life is like for people in other countries and areas across the world. I was very proud to take such a lovely group of students to embrace and fulfil the purpose of this trip and give them an experience of a lifetime that they will not forget. Well done to all the students who went and the brilliant team of staff too!



SUMMER FAIR

Our dancers had a brilliant time performing at the Summer Fair. Our Year 9's performed a piece based on a waiting room, Junior Dance performed their company piece and Year 10 performed A Linha Curva. Our dancers coped very well despite the temperature and gave impressive performances.

JASMIN VARDIMON WORKSHOP WITH YEAR 10

Our Year 10 students recently took part in a workshop with the world-renowned Jasmin Vardimon Company. Our dancers developed their floorwork through challenging sequences and learnt company repertoire from the piece 'Yesterday'. The workshop was creatively inspiring and has given our students some ideas for when they start their choreographic projects in October.

Jasmin Vardimon



STREET DANCE WORKSHOP WITH BPM DANCE YEAR 7 AND 8

Our Year 7 and 8 students from Junior Dance Company took part in a street dance workshop with Elizabeth from BPM dance. Students learnt hip-hop movements such as the Bart Simpson, the cabbage patch and the Smurf. We are hoping to run a regular street dance club with BPM dance from September, so keep a look out for more information on this!



Miss M Cull
Head of Dance



A MASSIVE WELL DONE TO ALL STUDENTS WHO TOOK PART IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR PE AND DANCE THIS YEAR, WE ARE INCREDIBLY PROUD OF YOU!

- 500+ STUDENTS ATTENDED EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS (EXCLUDING Y11)
- 402 STUDENTS REPRESENTED THE SCHOOL COMPETITIVELY (EXCLUDING Y11) = 40% OF ALL STUDENTS
- INTER-COMMUNITY SPORTING EVENTS
- DOWNLANDS ENTERED COMPETITIONS FOR 16 DIFFERENT SPORTS
- 321 FIXTURES ACROSS 190 SCHOOL DAYS
- 17 DISTRICT FINALS
- 16 COUNTY FINALS
- 8 SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL FINALS
- 4 NATIONAL FINALS

U15 GIRLS HANDBALL

Huge congratulations to the U15 Girls Handball team who represented South East England at the National Handball finals in Nottingham. There were 13 teams at the finals and the girls went on to finish third. They played some fantastic handball throughout the competition and it is an outstanding achievement to be the third best team in England, especially as the standard was extremely high. Well done girls, we are extremely proud of you!



U15 BOYS HANDBALL

A huge well done to the U13 Boys Handball team who went to Nottingham to compete in the National Handball finals. The boys represented South East England and played extremely well throughout the competition and showed great grit and determination. There were 15 teams at the finals and the boys finished third in England. They only narrowly lost by one goal to the team who went on to win the competition. Well done boys, we are immensely proud of you!



YEAR 8 BASKETBALL TEAM

It has been another amazing year for the Year 8 Basketball team, they made it through to the Junior NBA finals for a second year in a row. The team played extremely well throughout the competition but narrowly lost by one point in the finals. They played with great spirit and determination and are now in the National Premier competition next year. We are very proud of the team and are already looking forward to seeing how well they can play next year!



SPORTS DAY 2026

On Monday 13th July, we held our annual Sports Day for all students. Every student took part in a range of activities throughout the day, encouraging their peers and demonstrating outstanding sportsmanship. It was fantastic to see so much enthusiasm, determination and teamwork on display.

There were some incredible performances across the day, with several school records being broken. Special congratulations go to our Year 10 students, who made their final Sports Day a memorable one with their excellent attitude, effort and support for one another.

Final Community Results:

- 🏆 Beacon – 1st
- 🥈 Weald – 2nd
- 🥉 South Downs – 3rd
- Wolstonbury – 4th

Congratulations to everyone who took part and helped make the day such a success!



PE AND DANCE AWARDS EVENING 2026

On the 30th June, the PE and Dance Department came together to celebrate the dedication, determination and outstanding achievements of more than 300 students who have excelled in sport and dance throughout the year. This occasion is about far more than medals, trophies and accolades. It is a celebration of commitment, teamwork, resilience and the countless hours of practice, training and perseverance that have led to success.

We were incredibly proud and honoured to be able to welcome Mr Vic Bragg to celebrate the sporting achievements of our students. From 1994 until 2024, Vic worked at Brighton & Hove Albion, where he played a pivotal role in developing what began as a Centre of Excellence and grew into the club's highly respected Academy. During those three decades, he helped shape the careers of countless young footballers, including current and former Premier League stars such as Lewis Dunk, Solly March and Jack Hinshelwood, leaving a lasting legacy at one of England's most admired academies. Vic is someone who has dedicated his life to helping others achieve their potential. As a player, coach, teacher, mentor and author, he has inspired thousands of young people to believe in themselves, work hard and enjoy the journey.

Across our extra-curricular activities, competitions, performances and dance events, our students have demonstrated exceptional talent, passion and sportsmanship. They have represented themselves, their teammates and our community with pride, embracing challenges, supporting one another and striving to be their very best. Whether achieving success at local, regional or national level, every student being recognised this evening has made a remarkable contribution.

We honoured not only the champions and trophy winners, but every individual who has shown courage, determination and a love for their chosen activity. We also extend our gratitude to the teachers, parents and families whose encouragement and support have played such an important role in these achievements.



CAREERS

Another busy half term is drawing to a close for the careers department.

Our Year 10s are out on their work experience placements during the last week of term. Many of them will be working in local businesses, so do keep an eye out for new members of staff who may have popped up! A huge thank you to all the businesses who have given up their time and expertise to allow our students a flavour of the working world, we couldn't do it without your support. A big thank you also to the parents who went above and beyond in finding placements. With 266 students to deal with, it is a mountain to try and climb solo, so it is much appreciated. I hope that they will all have had an experience where they find out more about themselves and the world of work, and that it motivates them for the choices they have before them when they leave Downlands.

Many of our Year 10s took the opportunity to try Taster Days at our local further education providers. Hopefully this will have given them a sense of what life at college is like, and which subjects they might wish to select. There will be open events at all the providers in the Autumn term, so still plenty of chances to explore the many different routes post Downlands.

Over the summer holidays I encourage all of the Year 10s to use their Unifrog accounts to hunt for more information about careers of interest. They can complete the quizzes available and see what career roles are suggested for them if they have no idea where to start, or search for career fields within the careers library to find out more about the range of roles within any given sector. In preparing for choosing their next education provider, do look on college websites and read the content of the courses on offer, to start creating short lists of what you might want to study and where.

Those students who have not had their careers 1:1 meeting with me thus far will be called for one during the autumn term. If you feel your child would benefit from having their meeting sooner rather than later, please email careers@downlands.org to let me know.

Save the date invitations have been sent home to all Year 10 parent and carers for our Find Your Path evening on Tuesday 22nd September. Full details will follow when we return in September, but please mark this in your diary. All Year 11 students are expected to attend and we welcome all at home to come along too.

I am sure that our Year 11s will reap the benefits of their hard work with their GCSE results in the summer. Should things not pan out the way they wanted on Results Day, they should contact their chosen college or training provider to see if they are still able to take their planned courses, or whether they will accept them on an alternative course. For any students still holding more than one placement, they must confirm for definite which college they will be attending on Results Day at the very latest. Also, remember to add a personal email to your Unifrog account so that you can continue to access all the amazing information on here once your Downlands email is closed down. It costs you nothing and is free careers advice at your fingertips!

Enjoy the summer and see you in September!

Ms H

WEBSITE - CAREERS INFORMATION

[Downlands/curriculum/work-experience-careers](https://www.downlands.org.uk/curriculum/work-experience-careers)

Please visit the Careers section of the school website where you will find a wealth of information on career pathways and next steps:

- [General Careers Information](#)
- [College Open Events](#)
- [Careers Education](#)
- [Specific Career Fields](#)
- [Work Experience](#)
- [Careers Speed Dating](#)
- [Find Your Path](#)
- [Apprenticeships & T Levels](#)
- [Job Vacancies & Competitions](#)

YEAR 11 LEAVERS PROM

It was lovely to see everyone dressed up and enjoying themselves at the Downlands Prom. It was a very well-deserved celebration for our students after all the hard work they have put into their GCSEs. Thanks to everyone at Pangdean for putting on such a fantastic event.

Good luck to our Year 11s with your next steps. We look forward to welcoming you back for the GCSE Certificate Evening on 26 November!



FAREWELL TO THE DOWNLANDS CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

After an incredible 30 years of dedicated service to our school, Di Hunt has stepped down from her role as Chair of Governors. Over the years, she has generously shared her time, expertise and unwavering commitment, helping to support the school and its pupils through many changes and developments. We are immensely grateful for her outstanding contribution and the lasting impact she has made on our school community. We wish Di every happiness for the future and thank her sincerely for 30 years of remarkable service.



DOWNLANDS STUDENT - YOUTH CABINET MEMBER

Hi, Frank here! It was my absolute privilege to be able to give two democracy awards to Downlands on Wednesday: a certificate for running in the Youth Parliament elections and a trophy for 70% voter turnout. We won these at the West Sussex Democracy Awards last Monday, during which I got to meet loads of brilliant people and schools where Youth Parliament is also run.

After being elected in April, I'm hard at work as the campaign lead of the Education and Opportunities campaign, focusing on SEND, financial and careers education and political awareness. You can expect me to make an appearance in September for an assembly! Thank you so much to everyone that voted in the Youth Parliament elections and made this possible – I wouldn't be in this position without you! And to all the aspiring young leaders out there, you could run to represent Hassocks in 2 years' time.



ROCKS

Resilient • Optimistic • Community • Kind • Self Aware



RAISING MONEY FOR

**BREAST
CANCER
NOW** The research
& care charity

COMMUNITY CHARITY DAYS THANK YOU !

Thank you to all the students who have contributed to our community charity days this year. On these charity event days, a particular community brings in cakes to sell to the other tutor groups in their year group.

A special thank you to

Beacon, who raised money for **Children in Need**

Weald, who raised money for **Red Nose Day**

South Down and **Wolstonbury**, who raised money for Breast Cancer Now. Your generosity and commitment show the true ROCKS values of our school and demonstrate the importance of kindness, community and supporting others.

RESILIENCE
OPTIMISM
COMMUNITY
KINDNESS
SELF AWARE

★ ROCKSTARS ★ CELEBRATION

Our ROCKSTARS summer term assembly took place last week. The students with the most points in each category, and the overall winners from each year group, enjoyed treats in the hall and time off timetable as a reward for their amazing efforts this term. Congratulations to all winners!

DOWNLANDS GOT TALENT

Congratulations to the winners of the Downlands Got Talent competition!

-  Ayda-Rae – Drumming
-  Jasmine – Singing
-  Ludo – Magic Trick

Well done to all of our talented performers, and a huge congratulations to our winners!

WEALD SOUTHDOWN BEACON WOLSTONBURY COMMUNITY WINNERS

The winning community with the most ROCKS points is announced today – so huge congratulations to those in the winning community who will be off on a reward trip to CHESSINGTON WORLD OF ADVENTURES on 25th September



Downlands School Summer Fair

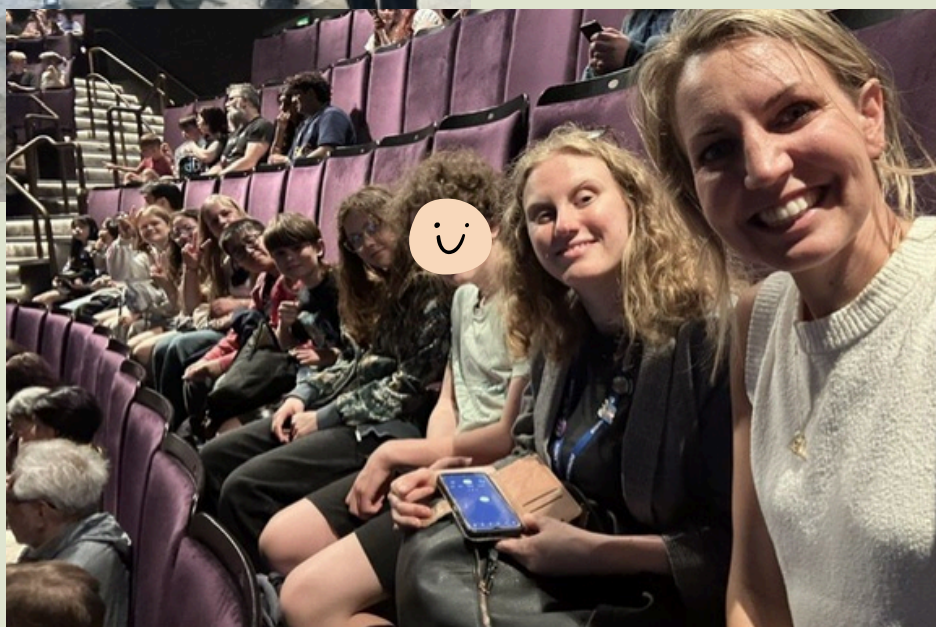
Thank you to all of the students involved in the Summer Fair. The prefects did an amazing job, the Year 7 stalls were brilliant, and all of the performances were fantastic. It really was a great afternoon.

JAPANESE CLUB

THEATRE TRIP TO LONDON

On Tuesday 30th June, the KS3 Japanese club made a trip to London to see "My Neighbour Totoro" at Gillian Lynne Theatre to see the West End production of the much-loved Studio Ghibli film. It was a fantastic trip and a real privilege to see such a moving and magical production. Our Japanese-enthusiasts thoroughly enjoyed the evening and thank you to Miss Haynes, fellow "My Neighbour Totoro" enthusiast for accompanying us!

If you are interested in joining the KS3 Japanese club, please speak with Ms Johnson in the Languages department.



DOWNLANDS SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

OUR FABULOUS DSA

Thank you to our fabulous DSA and to everyone who has volunteered and supported our community fundraising events this year.

It has been a great year, full of markets, fairs, quizzes and fabulous prize draws. The funds raised go towards the Character Passport and school projects that we otherwise wouldn't be able to fund.

Thank you all for your continued support!



SUMMER FAIR

Thank you so much to everyone who came along, joined in, supported the stalls, enjoyed the games and helped create such a lovely atmosphere.

A big thank you as well to all the staff, volunteers, families and local community who gave their time to make today happen.

It was wonderful to see everyone together, smiling and enjoying the day.

BECOME A MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER HELPER

The PTA are always looking for new members to help raise funds for the school – this can be as little as helping for an hour at an event to being more involved with the organising of events. It's a great way to get to know the school and staff.

Whether you would like to join the main organising committee or just offer your assistance for selected events, please contact the school if you are interested in getting involved. All parents are automatically a member of the DSA so please pop along to one of our meetings – everyone is welcome!

DOWNLANDS COMEDY NIGHT

Join us for the Downlands Comedy Night on Friday, 20th November! Featuring multi-award-winning MC Stephen Grant and hilarious stand-up star Zoe Lyons (Mock the Week, Q.I, Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow) with more exciting acts still to be announced.

Tickets are £15.50, the event is for ages 16+, and refreshments will be available on the night. Don't miss out on what promises to be a fantastic evening of comedy and fun—grab your tickets before they sell out!

VISIT OUR NEW DSA EVENTS PAGE

Details of all upcoming PTA events can be found here

<https://www.pta-events.com/downlandsschoolassociation>

✉ dsa@downlands.org

📘 <https://www.facebook.com/downlandsschoolassociation/>

📷 [downlands_school__association](#)

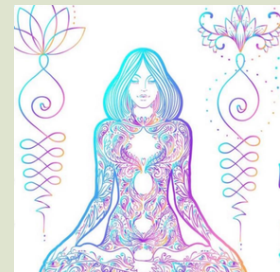
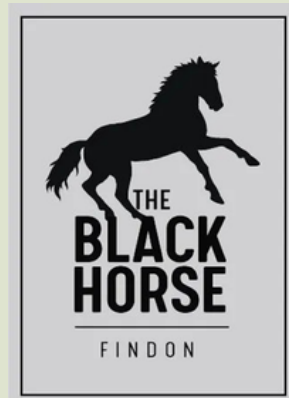


THANK YOU

THANK YOU TO THESE
GENEROUS LOCAL
BUSINESSES FOR DONATING
FABULOUS PRIZES TO OUR
SUMMER PRIZE DRAW!

WE RAISED £2,000

The Oak Barn
RESTAURANT AND BAR



ONLINE COACHING • NUTRITIONAL ADVICE



RebeccaYOGAYOU



mathstutorjackie



the ickle wax company

DOWNLANDS COMEDY NIGHT

Get ready for a fantastic evening of laughter on Friday, 20th November! The lineup includes multi-award-winning MC Stephen Grant, who has performed at Brighton Komedia and The Comedy Store, and hilarious award-winning stand-up star Zoe Lyons, known for Mock the Week, QI and Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow, with more exciting acts still to be announced.

Tickets are £15.50 plus fees, and the event is for ages 16+ only.

Refreshments will also be available on the night.

Whether you're a die-hard comedy fan or simply looking for a fun night out with friends, this promises to be an absolute blast—so grab your tickets before they sell out!

<https://pta.events/dsa-comedy-night-2026>



DOWNLANDS COMEDY FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2026



**STEPHEN
GRANT**

**ZOE
LYONS**

**AND MORE
GREAT ACTS...**

TICKETS NOW ON SALE
<https://pta.events/dsa-comedy-night-2026>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INSET DAYS

- Tuesday, 1st September
- Wednesday, 2nd September – Staff Training
- Friday, 4th December
- Monday, 4th January
- Monday, 12th April
- Friday, 2nd July

EARLY CLOSURES

- Tuesday, 15th September
- Tuesday, 23rd February 2027

On these days, school will close at 2pm for staff training. Transport will be arranged and we are able to supervise students who are unable to leave early.

LATE START

- Friday, 2nd October – 10:00am

AUTUMN TERM 2026

Tuesday, 1st September – Inset Day – school closed to students

Wednesday, 2nd September – Staff Training – school closed to students

Thursday, 3rd September – Students return to school. Please see below the timings for the first day and note the staggered start.

8:35am – Year 7 students to arrive on the playground (students will be met and guided to their tutor rooms)

9:45am – Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 arrive and go to their tutor bases (Please note if for transport of childcare reason students in Year 8 – 11 need to arrive earlier, provision will be made for them in the canteen)

11:00am – Break time

11:20am – Normal timetable resumes for all students

Monday 26th to Friday 30th October – Half Term

Monday 2nd November – Students return and school resumes

Saturday 28th November – DSA Christmas Market

Friday 18th December – End of Term – Students dismissed at 12:20pm

Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January 2027 – Christmas Holidays

Students return – Tuesday 5th January 2027

TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

- 8.35am First (warning) bell
- 8.40am Registration
- 9.00am Lesson 1
- 10.00am Lesson 2
- 11.00am Break
- 11.20am Lesson 3
- 12.20pm Lesson 4
- 1.20pm Lunch
- 1.55pm End of lunch
- 1.55pm Lesson 5 (including 10 minutes DEAR Time ** for Key Stage 3)
- 3.05pm End of school day

The school site is open to students from 8.20am, students will not be able to enter the school building until 8.35am (unless the weather is inclement).

Years 8 to 11 will assemble on the playground, Year 7 at the amphitheatre. The gates will be locked at 8.39am and the students will be marked 'late' after this.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ORDERING SCHOOL SUPPLIES VIA SCOPAY

Please be aware that after ordering supplies on SCOPAY from the Library, Maths or PE department, students will need to go to the respective department offices and collect their items. Each department will have a list of students who purchased items.

UPDATING CONTACT DETAILS - MCAS

Please ensure that any updates to your contact information are made through the MCAS app rather than via email. This helps us keep records accurate and up to date efficiently. Thank you for your support!

MCAS - PHOTO PERMISSIONS

We enjoy sharing photos of the students participating on trips, sports and clubs, on our newsletter and on social media.

If you are happy for your child to be included in these photos please ensure that you have given consent by ticking the following on MCAS -

Photo Online

Photo and name in Press

Photo Print use externally.

REPORTING ABSENCE



If you haven't already, please download the free Studybugs app, or register on the Studybugs website, and use it to tell us whenever your child is ill and unable to attend school. You can call us to leave a message to report an absence, however Studybugs is our preference for absence reporting as it feeds directly in our registers.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Please remember to leave a message for attendance (ext 228) before 8.30am to advise if your child will be late due to medical or illness. Likewise, a child will not be released from school without prior notice (before 8.30am) of an appointment.

CANTEEN ACCOUNTS - NO OVERDRAFTS FROM SEPTEMBER

Please note: From September, we will no longer be allowing overdrafts on Scopay, except in cases of extreme emergency. We kindly ask parents and carers to ensure that sufficient funds are available in their child's account to cover any purchases.

LOST PROPERTY

Please ensure you name all items belonging to your child. All items found around the school are handed in to lost property. Children can look for items at break and lunch time from the Attendance Officer. During the term we give named items to your child's tutor or PSO to return to them, if your child hasn't claimed them. Due to the amount of unclaimed unnamed items, we donate these items to charity at the end of every term. We cannot be responsible for lost items not handed in to lost property.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL ROOM

Please ensure that your emergency contact information is up to date. If you move home, get a new mobile number or your work number changes, please remember to let us know; we need to be able to contact you in an emergency or if your child is unwell.

Please do not send your child to school if they have sickness or diarrhoea. You should keep your child at home for 48 hours after their last episode of sickness or diarrhoea

Hay fever – the school does not administer antihistamines for the symptoms of hay fever. We ask that this be administered at home before the start of the day. If medication during the school day must be provided to us in the original pharmacist's container.

We would ask that where possible you ask your GP to administer a three-dose medication to avoid the impact on the school day. A 'Request for School to Administer Medicine' form must accompany it. Under exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed that their administration is required to allow the student to remain in school, the school will administer non-prescription medication for a maximum period of 48 hours. Any non-prescription medication administered in school must have been administered in the past without adverse effect. Again, a 'Request for School to Administer Medicine' form must accompany it. Students must not carry their medication in school, apart from asthma inhalers and Anaphylaxis Auto Injectors, all other medication must be stored securely in the medical room.

VAT REDUCTION OVER THE SUMMER

From 25 June to 1 September 2026, the Government is temporarily cutting VAT from 20% to 5% on children's meals in restaurants, children and family tickets to cinemas, theatres, concerts and exhibitions, and admission to a wide range of attractions. Combined with free bus travel during August for children aged 5 to 15 in England, families and young people will be able to enjoy experiences that make summer special, including visits to the kinds of cultural and educational attractions that enrich children's lives outside the classroom.

DOWNLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Looking for the perfect venue for your next event, club, class or performance? We offer a wide range of high-quality facilities available for hire during evenings and weekends:



- Spacious **Main Hall** – ideal for large events and gatherings
- **STEM Suite** large room with tables and chairs and adjoining **kitchen area**
- **Canteen** space with access to the **school kitchen** (if required)
- Blacked out **Drama Studio**
- Purpose-built **Dance Studio**
- Modern **Classrooms**
- Outdoor **Amphitheatre** – perfect for performances or talks
- Full-size **Astroturf Pitch** – suitable for sports and training

Whether you're running a community group, hosting a workshop or event, or need space for rehearsals or sports, we offer flexible options at excellent rates.

ENQUIRE TODAY
sfairbank@downlands.org



Artroom Brighton is the South East's leading provider of art classes for 6 to 18 year olds. Since 2008, over 15,000 young people, who attend over 150 different schools have created outstanding art in our Hove studio.

During term time, we offer after-school sessions for children aged 6 to 10, as well as evening classes for young people aged 11 to 18 and adults. Pupils studying for GCSE, A-Level, Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award or those applying for art scholarships find the evening option extremely useful.

SUMMER HOLIDAY ART WORKSHOPS 2026

This summer, we are offering workshops spanning 8 weeks, with each day having a different theme.

WHERE

Artroom Brighton. Hove Methodist Church,
7 Portland Road, Hove BN3 5DR

WHEN

Weekdays: Monday 17th July - Tuesday 1st September

COST

£40 per day (£72 siblings, ages 6 - 13)
Book online: courses@artroombrighton.co.uk

AS FEATURED IN

AS SEEN ON



THE  TIMES
theguardian
The Daily Telegraph

Qualified Teachers
with enhanced DBS

www.artroombrighton.co.uk



Van Gogh / Studio Ghibli. 16 years



Cubist Harry Potter. 11 years



Among Us / Kadinsky. 9 years

SUMMER HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS 2026

Mon 13th July: Studio Ghibli / Street Art!
 Tues 14th July: Kawaii Marvel / DC mash up!
 Weds 15th July: Jamie Smart / Star Wars Mash up!
 Thurs 16th July: Zootopia and Vexx mash up!
 Fri 17th July: Diary of a Wimpy kid Doodles

Mon 20th July: Snoopy in Brighton!
 Tues 21st July: Picasso K-Pop Demon Hunters!
 Weds 22nd July: Kawaii / Studio Ghibli Mash up!
 Thurs 23rd July: Lego / Basquiat Mash up!
 Fri 24th July: Zootopia and Vexx Mash up!

Mon 27th July: Kawaii/Marvel DC mash up!
 Tues 28th July: Kitty Quest Doodles!
 Weds 29th July: Bunny V Monkey and Miro Mash up!
 Thurs 30th July: Lego Street art!
 Fri 31st July: Anime Self-portraits

Mon 3rd August: K-Pop Demon Street art!
 Tues 4th August: Moana/Picasso Mash up!
 Weds 5th August: Toy Story 5 / Vexx Mash up!
 Thurs 6th August: Diary of a Wimpy Kid Street art!
 Fri 7th August: Dr Seuss Superheroes

Mon 10th August: Minions and Miro Mash up!
 Tues 11th August: Jamie Smart / K-Pop Demon Mash up!
 Weds 12th August: Sponge Bob / Van Gogh Mash up!
 Thurs 13th August: Wimpy Kid Surrealist Mash up!
 Fri 14th August: Toy Story 5 / Picasso portraits!

Mon 17th August: Jamie Smart Superheroes!
 Tues 18th August: Looshkin Book Covers
 Weds 19th August: Toy Story 5 / Vexx Mash up!
 Thurs 20th August: Supermario Doodles!
 Fri 21st August: Moana and Basquiat mash up!

Mon 24th August: Kawaii / Marvel DC Mash up!
 Tues 25th August: Toy Story 5 / Vexx Mash up!
 Weds 26th August: Moana / Picasso Portraits!
 Thurs 27th August: Diary of a Wimpy Kid Doodles!
 Fri 28th August: Zootopia / Vexx Mash up!

Mon 31st August: Jamie Smart Superheroes!
 Tues 1st September: Lego Street Art



Kand-isney! 14 years



Sonic / Basquiat. 10 years



Snoopy Street Art. 8 years



R. Briggs Street art. 10 years



Studio Ghibli Totems. 11 years



Murakami Cartoon. 9 years



Beaker's Starry Nightmare. 13 years



Dali / Among Us. 9 years



John Piper Landscape. 10 years



Learn to sail at Crawley Mariners

www.cmyc.co.uk

Ages 6 - 15

Free monthly teaching sessions

**Junior Helm Week -
An action packed course**

**17th - 21st August
AM or PM sessions
Additional Cost**

**Annual junior
membership from
£64**



COMMUNITY BOARD



SPEECH & DRAMA LESSONS

Do you have a child who loves to act?

Or maybe your child lacks confidence and wants to develop their communication skills?

If so, I am here to help!

My name is Liz Meredith-Jones and I offer 'Speech and Drama' lessons for students of all ages at Downlands School.

I trained at LAMDA and worked professionally before retraining as a teacher nearly 20 years ago. Since then I have taught both in schools and privately, helping students develop confidence, creativity and performance skills in a warm and supportive environment.

I use the 'New Era examinations syllabus, which I particularly value for its broad, flexible and creative approach. Students can explore acting, poetry & prose and public speaking through a wide variety of texts and material tailored to their interests and abilities. Examinations are entirely optional.

Lessons are 30 minutes long and take place in a dedicated room within the school on Thursdays and Fridays. Students attend on a rota system so that they do not miss the same academic lesson twice within a term.

Current fees are:

- £17 shared lesson
- £21 solo lesson

Fees are limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis. To register your interest please complete the online form below

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfSjCPqG8vgmxxRHviTdSsbm3qOKhtYzJroVuTJyN_xS4B5Q/viewform?usp=publish-editor

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at mrs.meredith-jones@bhsfg.com. Alternatively you may speak to Mrs Robertson, Head of Drama at Downlands.

I am really looking forward to starting at the school and working with your child.

Liz Meredith-Jones