

WELCOME TO DOWNEND SCHOOL

Downend School

PARENT NEWSLETTER:

3rd July, 2026

Head's Messages

Good afternoon everyone,

As we come to the end of Enrichment Week 2026, I want to offer a huge and heartfelt thank you to our staff, students, and parents. This week is a major undertaking that begins many months in advance, and it has been wonderful to see all that hard work come together so successfully.

The feedback from visitors, trip providers, and employers has been incredibly positive. Our students have represented Downend brilliantly - showing resilience, trying new things, stepping bravely out of their comfort zones, and displaying fantastic manners throughout. It has been a true celebration of our Downend Pride values in action.

It's been a fantastic week across all year groups, with six residentials taking place, including Year 7 camps, London trips for Year 8, Krakow for Year 12, and both Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh expeditions. Students have explored the London Dungeons and the Tower of London, stayed in hotels with wonderful views, gone surfing and climbing, taken part in archery, and walked a very long way across beautiful countryside - and that's only scratching the surface.

Back at school, students have been preparing and performing a Matilda workshop (and if they're anything like me, they'll be singing *Revolting Children* for weeks). They've uncovered the lesser-known history of our local area through an educational walk and flexed their creative muscles with photography, collages, green-screen workshops, and superbly crafted garden decorations.

Science has been great fun, with rockets launched to Mars and investigations into *Who Killed Mr Rolle?* Apparently I was the prime suspect for a while, though my alibi is watertight after spending part of the week with 97 students in Devon. Students have also applied their Maths skills to practical challenges, including calculating the height of the H block, designing impossible pictures, and learning about the London Underground and Graph Theory. It clearly captured their imaginations, and it was lovely to see.

Work experience has gone brilliantly, with some truly lovely feedback from employers. Turning up to a workplace for the first time is no small feat, and this achievement should not be underestimated. It's fantastic to see so many students gaining this valuable experience. Alongside the in-person placements, students have also taken part in virtual work experience, designing a new breakfast meal deal for Tesco (other supermarkets are available!). Some of these creations were good enough to imagine on the shelves; others would have required quite a bit of bravery to try! Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible.

Elsewhere, Year 10 enjoyed Lego stop-motion in the English department. I'm not sure Shakespeare imagined *Macbeth* quite in the way we witnessed this week, but it certainly added to the fun and learning. In PE, Year 10 have been playing pickleball, ultimate frisbee, and flag football, among other sports, which has kept them very busy.

It has been an incredibly busy week for absolutely everyone involved. We now have hundreds of photos to sort through, and we will share more once we've whittled them down and completed our usual safeguarding checks. These will likely appear in the final celebratory newsletter of the year.

As Enrichment Week ends, we head into the final few weeks of term. As per Wednesday's communication, the school will sadly be closed on Monday 6th due to strike action. A further update will be sent on Monday regarding arrangements for Tuesday. If your child receives free school meals, they will be able to collect a packed lunch from main reception between 12–1pm on Monday. For work on Monday, students are encouraged to log in to SENECA, SPARX, and EDUCAKE to complete tasks. Alternatively, the [KS3 curriculum maps](#) and [KS4 curriculum maps](#) on the school website contain suggested resources.

We are very much looking forward to the Summer Music Concert, the Art Exhibition, and the Downend Awards Ceremony next week, and we hope you will be able to join us for these events.

I want to end by once again thanking our staff, who plan, prepare, lead, and attend these trips and activities out of goodwill and a deep commitment to providing our students with rich, memorable experiences. Thank you for your support with this event, and of course, a huge thank you to your wonderful children for embracing the spirit of the week.

I hope everyone enjoys a restful weekend.

With best wishes

Rachael Corns,

Headteacher