

Dear DMS families,

Although the wet weather this week could have dampened our spirits, I'm delighted to say that our pupils have returned in high spirits and settled back into school life and learning exceptionally well here at DMS.

Our Year 6 pupils are doing brilliantly with the 'Soft Starts' in the mornings—arriving promptly and focusing on key Maths and English skills. These short sessions are proving to be a fantastic way for pupils to recall prior learning and build their confidence. A big well done to everyone who has been attending—keep it up!

As Remembrance Day approaches, we've been reminding pupils about the British Values and the protected characteristics that are so important in our society. This week, we've been encouraging them to "Give Me Five!"—using their five fingers to remember each of the British Values: Democracy, Rule of Law, Tolerance, Respect, and Liberty. Why not ask them to show you at home and see how many they can recall?

Mr Kelsall has also invited new students to stand as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors this week. At DMS, we want all pupils to understand what bullying is: a repeated, targeted action—whether physical, emotional, verbal, or online. We're encouraging everyone to be upstanders (those who speak out) rather than bystanders (those who stand by and watch). While we strive for a school environment free from bullying, we know that when it does occur, the most important thing is to speak out and seek help. Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, along with staff, are here to support. Creating a culture where bullying is not accepted empowers everyone to use their voice—an important life lesson that extends far beyond DMS.

Thank you to all the parents who took part in our school survey last term. We received some really positive feedback and kind words about the changes we've implemented as a leadership team. We truly appreciate your support. We'll be sharing the survey results with you soon and will also be inviting parents to a Parent Voice session next term—your thoughts and opinions are always valued.

Finally, I'm thrilled to announce that we came FIRST in the Tesco Community Grant scheme and have won an amazing £1,500! This funding will be used to purchase new instruments and upgrade our music room resources. A huge thank you to everyone who popped counters (some of you—handfuls!) into the collection boxes during your Tesco visits. We are incredibly grateful for your support!

**Mrs King**

*Deputy Headteacher*

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### Important dates for your diary

11th November	Flu immunisation for all year groups—parents to sign up or opt out
11th November	Remembrance Service—pupils in Scouts, Girl guides or Cadets are welcome to attend school in their uniforms
14th November	Coffee morning for parents/carers of children with SEND – 9:15am – (invite sent by email too)
<b>14th November</b>	<b>PTFA Quiz Night</b>
<b>18th November</b>	<b>Open Morning for new parents – 9.15 to 10.15am</b>
10th December	Songs around the Christmas Tree – Years 5/6
<b>11th December</b>	<b>Open morning for new parents – 9.15 to 10.15am</b>
<b>12th December</b>	<b>PTFA Disco</b>
12th December	Christmas Lunch – Local Food Links
17th December	Christmas reflection concert at the Dorford Centre - evening

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### Introducing this week...

Mrs Whiter joined DMS this September as the teacher of our new SEN class, ROARS 1. She is already loving being part of the DMS community!! Since completing her teacher training with the University of Southampton in 2022, she has had a lot of experience working with children with SEN. Mrs Whiter got married last year and had an amazing honeymoon in Canada during the Summer holidays this year. She loves nature so while on the Pacific coast she was thrilled to see eagles, whales, a bear and wolf tracks on the beach! She even battled the elements having to deal with a tsunami warning and a wildfire! Having grown up in Dorchester herself, Mrs Whiter loves walking by the river or in Thornecombe Woods at the weekends. Likewise, she also loves curling up with a cup of tea and a blanket whilst gaming or cross stitching!



### How do you choose what topics are covered in assemblies?

Assemblies are a valuable opportunity for our pupils to explore the Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) aspects of society. Each term, we ensure that all elements of SMSC are thoughtfully covered, providing our pupils with a broad and meaningful range of topics and experiences.

Our assemblies include a variety of engaging themes and speakers. These may feature: Religious speakers sharing celebrations and traditions from their faiths, Historical events that continue to shape our society today (e.g. Guy Fawkes Night, the Stonewall Riots), Student voice opportunities, such as elections, house competitions, and anti-bullying initiatives, Cultural and awareness celebrations, including Chinese New Year, Diwali, Mental Health Awareness Week, and Book Week and Inspirational guest speakers, such as next week's visitor—a woman who travels to war-torn countries to provide humanitarian and medical aid.

We aim to offer a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, helping our pupils grow into well-rounded individuals who understand and appreciate the richness of the world around them. By hearing from people from all walks of life, our pupils learn the importance of empathy, respect, and open-mindedness.

### Pupil Question of the Week

#### There's a performance called 'The Wasps' Nest' for years 7 and 8 next week – what's this about?

The play "**The Wasps' Nest**" by the charity **Vita Nova** is coming to DMS. It is a powerful theatrical performance that tells the story of how a teenager, "Jo," becomes embroiled in **county lines, knife crime, and drug exploitation**. Jo, who is lured into a dangerous path after meeting a character named "Wasp" while online gaming. The story depicts the methods used by criminal gangs to groom and entrap young people into distributing drugs, often a form of modern-day slavery. The performance highlights the devastating consequences for everyone involved and the ease with which a young person can "go off track".

The Wasps nest has been touring all secondary schools around Dorset and BCP as part of an educational outreach programme. It supports the PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) curriculum in our school here at DMS.

After you have watched the play, you will get to ask questions to all the actors who have performed!

### Reading News

#### Upcoming Book Swap – Wednesday 19th November

Our Reading Ambassadors are excited to announce a Book Swap taking place in the library during **Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 morning break times on Wednesday 19th November**. This is a wonderful opportunity for pupils to discover a new book - completely free!

To take part, pupils simply need to bring in a suitable reading book from home that they no longer wish to keep and have already loved and enjoyed. They can exchange it in the library for a token, which can then be used on the day of the swap to choose a different book.

Extra donations of unwanted books are also very welcome and will help to refresh our library and classroom book trolleys.

Bring a book, swap a story, and spread the love of reading across Dorchester Middle School!



## Remembrance Day



As a school, we will be commemorating Remembrance next week, on Tuesday 11th November. Any pupils who are part of the Cadets, Scouts or Girl guides are welcome to attend school in these uniforms on that day.

## PTFA News

Our wonderful PTFA committee, have worked really hard behind the scenes over the past couple of years, breathing new life into the PTFA. Last year alone, they raised over £19,000 to support DMS with valuable resources, which is truly amazing. If you would like to know exactly where that money went, do check their AGM minutes on the school website.

Please do continue to support the events they organise, it makes a huge difference, as these events are the heart of the PTFA's fundraising, and we really can't do it without the support of the DMS families and staff.

The next event is **Friday 14th November**—a quiz night hosted by the fabulous Mr and Mrs Martin. It promises to be a great evening as usual, and we'd love to see you there! £3.00 per person for a 6:30pm start. The next event will be the Disco on **Friday 12th December** and before half term your child should have gone home with the Christmas Rotary Raffle tickets.

If you are interested in joining them or have some time to spare helping during these events in any way, please do contact them at: [ptfa.dms@gmail.com](mailto:ptfa.dms@gmail.com).

## Celebrating our amazing pupils...

As you may have seen on our DMS Facebook page, the amazing Harry in Year 6 took part in a football tournament in Barcelona before half term representing the UK with his team. Last weekend he took part again in the under 10s age group, this time with the fantastic Polly from Year 5. The team went undefeated and didn't concede a goal in the group stages. They then won their semi-final but unfortunately lost the final to a strong Brazilian team, meaning they came second overall. What talented players we have! Well done to them both!



To continue to celebrate our pupils, we couldn't not mention that just before half term, our very own Jack in Year 8, participated in the 'Great south run junior' race and did incredibly well. An awesome achievement Jack!

On Wednesday, Mr Kelsall, who is our Anti Bullying Champion, visited our Key Stage 2 children, to talk to them about Anti Bullying. He shared with the children what bullying is, what we can do to prevent it from happening and how we can support each other in school. He is looking to recruit a new team of Anti Bullying Ambassadors for the school, one child from each Homebase.

The process will start this week across the school, but from the show of hands that we had at the end of the Key Stage 2 assembly, we don't think there is going to be a shortage of candidates!



## What is happening in our Community

### Food Hygiene Inspection – 5 stars!!

We had our environmental health visit this week and we are pleased to let you know that we have achieved top marks - 5 stars!! There is a new sticker proudly being displayed on the main door into the school. Our Kitchen team have been vital in achieving this; well done and thank you for your commitment to the school and our children!!

FOOD HYGIENE RATING

0 1 2 3 4 **5**

VERY GOOD

### Summer Reading Challenge Success!

This summer, a fantastic number of pupils from Years 5, 6, and 7 took part in the national Summer Reading Challenge. The challenge encouraged pupils to read six books over the holidays and record their progress by logging their reads and visiting the local library. We're thrilled to announce that our school had the highest number of participants of any Dorset middle school – what an incredible achievement! Our enthusiastic readers truly rose to the occasion and smashed the challenge. Each participating pupil will receive a well-deserved certificate during upcoming assemblies. Congratulations to all our brilliant readers!

### Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) - Level 1 Award

We are so pleased to let you all know that our fantastic DMS Gardening Club has achieved a Level 1 of the RHS School Gardening Awards!! Thank you to Miss Shorman, volunteers and pupils who are amazing gardeners; they have truly transformed an area of the school and turned it into a beautiful and productive garden.



### SEND Coffee Morning for Parents/Carers

We are delighted to host the first Coffee morning of the academic year, for the parents and carers of our pupils with SEND, next Friday 14th November at 9:15am. Ms Layfield has been leading these meetings for the last few years, and they are always a fantastic way to get feedback from our parents/carers, and to get to know our pupils' needs better. After this meeting, we will try to accommodate different times on different days throughout the rest of the year. We are pleased to let you know that we will have the Targeted Youth Team joining us to talk about their work and answer any questions you might have, so it will be a very informative session. You do not need to reserve a space, just come to the main school reception on the day.

## 12 And finally...

With Christmas fast approaching, we're looking forward to a joyful and busy few weeks ahead, filled with learning, celebration, and festive cheer. There's so much to look forward to, and we can't wait to share these special moments with you and your children.

Wishing you a restful and enjoyable weekend.

**Mrs King**  
Deputy Head