

Dear DMS Families,

We have had a school full of fantastic visitors this week. On Monday, our Key Stage 2 children had the amazing opportunity to meet with Emma Green to talk about her new book 'The Not –so –Great- Escape'. Emma is local to Dorchester so it was a fantastic opportunity for our children to see that someone like them can achieve their aspirations.

Year 8 were joined on Thursday by Kat Jones from the Thomas Hardy School for a special Careers assembly. The assembly was an opportunity to hear about different careers and how they are linked to different GCSE options. It was brilliant!

On Friday, we continued with our love of offering different sporting opportunities to our students by hosting the Inter School tabletop cricket tournament. This event is also such fun to participate in and watch. We look forward to hosting it again next year!

I also want to congratulate our Year 6 who had a week of Mock SATS. This can be an anxious time for many of our students, and they all came into school and did their absolute best. They should all be very proud!!

I would like to also thank all our parents and carers who joined us for Parent Voice on Thursday. Hearing your views on where we are being successful as a school, but also areas we could still improve, are essential to us ensuring we can support all our students to thrive.

Ms Layfield

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Important dates for your diary

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| 2nd February | Y6 SATS Parents' Information Evening – 5pm (separate letter sent to all Y6 families) |
| 6th February | PTFA Bingo Night - Eyes down at 6:30pm |
| 8th – 14th February | Children's Mental Health Week – Sunday 8th Feb Junior Park Run - more information to follow |
| 13th February | Support Hub and Food Bank at DMS 2.30 to 4pm |
| 16th – 20th February | Half Term break |
| 4th – 5th March | Y5 Parent Consultation Evening – 4 to 6pm |
| 5th March | World Book Day – information to follow closer to the date |
| 18th March | SEND Parent Forum Meeting – 2pm |
| 20th March | Support Hub and Food Bank at DMS 2.30 to 4pm |
| 20th March | PTFA Disco |

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PTFA News

Just a little reminder of our upcoming **Bingo Night** on Friday 6th February!!! Doors will open at 6pm, eyes down at 6.30pm. The book is £5, which includes 6 games. There will be a bar and refreshments available - cash and card payments accepted on the night. Do join us and have a lovely family night out whilst supporting DMS!!!



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Parent Question of the Week

When will I know if my child will get extra help in their SATS?

This is a really important to us as a school. Making sure that our students have the right support and adaptations in all areas of their learning is vital to them being successful. We have already started to gather the evidence we need to make sure all students that need the extra help get it.

This is why the mocks are so important as this helps us see where some children may struggle and may need a little bit of extra support to be successful. We use this evidence to apply to the Department of Education for permission to give access arrangements.

We will explain more about this at the SATS evening on the 2nd February.

Pupil Question of the Week

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Why are my books being taken to be looked at?

It is really important to us at DMS that we are able to see all students in school, are making progress in their learning and being supported with the adaptations they may need as part of their IEP.

By taking time to look at your books, members of SLT can see how you are being supported and if you need any more help.

This gives us a chance to celebrate your successes and see what more we can do to help you thrive. It is also a chance for Mr Webb to hand out more of his gold stickers!

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Reading News

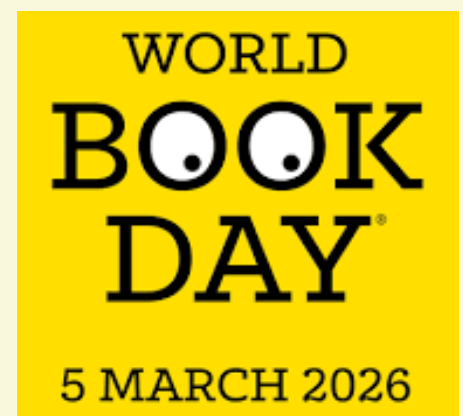
World Book Day Celebrations – Thursday 5th March

We are looking forward to celebrating **World Book Day** on **Thursday 5th March**, with a variety of exciting activities designed to inspire a love of reading across the school. Our Reading Ambassadors will be supporting the organisation of the day, helping to ensure the celebrations run smoothly.

Pupils will be able to enjoy events such as:

- A **Scholastic Book Fair**, offering a wide selection of books.
- A **Book Swap**, giving pupils the chance to exchange a book and discover something new.
- **Competitions**, with prizes to be won.

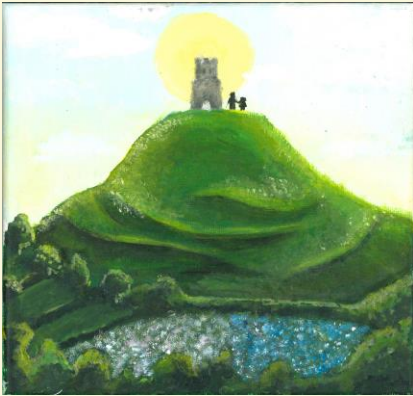
These are just some of the activities planned, with additional events taking place throughout the day. Further information will be sent home soon.



Celebrating our amazing pupils...

Our keen artists have done it again!! We are so very proud of Mia H, Niya B (both in Y8) and Lily N (Y7), who have been selected as 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners respectively, of the intermediate category of the Young Artist Competition from the Casterbridge Rotary Club. Huge congratulations to all three of them on this wonderful achievement. They have now the opportunity to be entered into the District competition!!

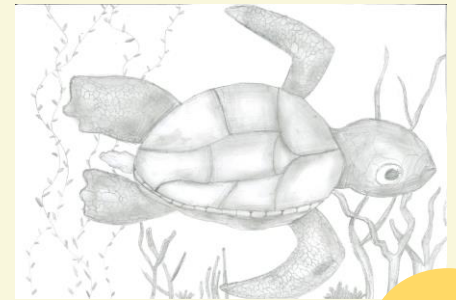
Mia H



Niya B



Lily N



Food Tech News

Our Years 6 & 8 were off to a good start with their assessment pieces for Food Technology, producing very attractive and delicious dishes fit for a restaurant!! DMS Bake Off, Master Chef or British Bake Off next...



The Fragility of Freedom Exhibition

What an incredible day we had on Friday last week at DMS!! The 'Fragility of Freedom' exhibition, allowed our Year 8 pupils to share their creative works to give a voice to a variety of issues around freedom, democracy, slavery, trafficking, war torn countries and oppression. It was a powerful day where pupils talked about what was on display and why. The Mayor of Dorchester and Councilors listened and talked with our pupils, ending with choosing a selection of works that will be displayed at the Corn Exchange for the upcoming Holocaust Memorial day. We are so proud of all our pupils and a huge thank you to Mr Greetham for putting together the most moving, poignant and powerful day!! More photos and videos on our Facebook page.



Congratulations to the recipients of the ROARS certificates of last week; you are all ROARSome!!!

Year 6 and Year 5



Year 7

Year 8



What is happening in our Community?

Launch of Community First at DMS

Today we are proudly launching: **DMS Community First** – a Support Hub and Food Bank for our school community. This was an initiative from our Attendance Officer, Mrs Stewart-Pope, and we hope it will be an additional way to support our pupils and their families. The families will be able to collect fresh and packaged food, toiletries, sanitary products, school uniform and coats. We also have several local teams and organisations joining us, including Early Help, Mosaic (youth bereavement), Targeted Youth, MHST (Mental Health Support Team), Citizens Advice, the You Trust and Young Carers who offered support and provided guidance. Don't worry if you miss it today, there are more dates to come on: **13th February, 20th March and 17th April**. Do contact Mrs Stewart Pope, Miss Easton or the school office if you have any queries.



Children's Mental Health Week

Dorchester Middle School is very proud to be participating in the Children's Mental Health Week as usual. This year the theme is: **This is My Place**. Once again, we will be encouraging our school community to participate in



The Great Field Parkrun. We will be supporting the Junior Parkrun on the Sunday 8th February and the Saturday 14th February Parkrun. Further information about the week, including how to participate in the Parkrun events, will follow in due course.

And finally...

I always look forward each term to my SEND Parents and Carers meetings. This term the meeting is on the 18th March at a new time of 2.15pm. I really hope that by offering different times through the year it opens the opportunity for more families to join. These meetings are a great opportunity to meet other parents and share ideas and concerns that can help us improve the offer in school to our students with SEND.

I hope you all have a fantastic weekend and some much-deserved family time.

Ms Layfield