

Dear DMS Families,

I am often asked if I can share one piece of advice which pupils would most benefit from educationally. The answer is easy – children need to read! Daily, widely and for pleasure!

2026 is the National Year of Reading and it has been really entertaining to hear famous voices on the radio share their thoughts about a book or author who has inspired them, introduced them to a new world and allowed their imagination to grow and develop.

My favourite book has always been George Orwell's 'Down and Out in Paris and London' and the insights it provides into the various characters he meets as he falls into poverty during the early twentieth century. I am sure you have your favourite book too!

At DMS, reading is central to all that we do. We are continuing to invest in our library, not only making it a pleasant place to read for pleasure (and the library is packed with pupils at break and lunchtime) but also providing books which are engaging. We have seen a 29% increase in the number of books borrowed by pupils over the last twelve months.

Additionally, we continue to prioritize how we support and challenge pupils across the curriculum to improve their reading ability. This includes thinking carefully about the texts we provide pupils, their exposure to vocabulary and how we provide background information to support a greater understanding of what is being read. Furthermore, we are strengthening our teaching of reading comprehension and the amount of reading undertaken in lessons.

Thank you for your support in reading with your child each night. I know there is a huge amount of reading undertaken at home and I also know juggling this with family life can often be challenging. Keep going – it will all pay off as your child progresses through their education.

Mr Webb

2

Important dates for your diary

16th – 20th February	Half Term break – school closed to pupils
2nd March	Workshop for parents in school – Difficulties w/sleep - 4.30 to 6pm
4th – 5th March	Y5 Parent Consultation Evening – 4 to 6pm
5th March	World Book Day – Information sent to all families
9th March	Information Evening for Y5 Residential trip - 5pm – Hall
18th March	SEND Parent Forum Meeting – 2pm
19th – 20th March	Y5 Residential trip to New Barn
20th March	Support Hub and Food Bank at DMS 2.30 to 4pm
20th March	PTFA Disco

3

PTFA News

Thank you so much for your continued support at everything we do to raise funds for the school. We raised the amazing amount of **£549.31** at the **Bingo** last Friday, plus everyone had a fantastic fun night!!

We would like to remind you about the Winter Walk. Wrap up warm and join the DMS PTFA Winter Walk around Poundbury!! Use the Clue Sheet (there are spare ones at the school reception) and head out to explore the local area. As you walk, work out the clues, answer the questions, and enjoy discovering Poundbury at your own pace. Once you're done, return your completed sheet to school to be entered into a prize draw to win a hamper! It's a great excuse to get out and about with friends and family over the next few weeks. Enjoy some fresh air, have a bit of fun, and support the PTFA at the same time.

Happy walking!!

I want to be able to track more easily the homework set by teachers for my child. Can the school help me do this?

By the start of the new academic year at the latest, we will be setting homework using the parent ARBOR app, which will enable you to track and know what homework has been set and when it is due. As ARBOR and recording homework electronically is new for us, we want to ensure that the system works correctly and that staff training is completed, prior to launching and will keep you updated about this.

Pupil Question of the Week

How can I improve my handwriting?

Whilst we know handwriting can be challenging for a number of pupils, we are continuing to support as many of you as possible with currently around 100 pupils receiving additional support every week.

World Book Day at DMS – Go All In on Reading!

World Book Day takes place on **Thursday 5th March 2026**, celebrating the **National Year of Reading** with the theme *Go All In*. We have lots of activities planned to inspire a love of reading across the school.

What is happening:

- **Scholastic Book Fair:** after school, Tuesday 3rd – Monday 9th March (card payments only or via <https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay/84585027>)
- **£1 World Book Day Voucher:** all pupils will receive one and we have added the digit one to this edition of the DMS Dozen
- **Competitions** (Entries due Wednesday 4th March):
 - *Extreme Reading* – read somewhere unusual (but safe!)
 - *Go All In on a 2p Coin* – tiny book-inspired artwork
- **Book Swap:** bring up to three suitable books to the library by Wednesday 4th March for breaktime swapping on World Book Day
- **Reading Ambassadors:** applications open on World Book Day
- **Dress-up (optional):** pupils and staff can dress as a book genre:
 - *Attenborough: Action & Adventure*
 - *Le Bron: Mystery*
 - *Malala: Fantasy*
 - *Simmonds: Other Times & Places*
- **On the day:** a variety of book and reading related activities



A full letter has already been sent home. Thank you for helping us celebrate reading and inspiring a love of books at DMS!

7 Celebrating our amazing pupils...

Two weeks ago, a group of amazing pupils took part in our enhanced PE day. Last Thursday they picked up their certificates for their fantastic efforts and for completing the PE intensive training day! Thank you Mr Palmer for inspiring our pupils with your love of PE!!



Congratulations to the Year 7 netballers who participated in the South Dorset Area Schools Competition this week. Teams from the area came together to play one another in Ossies sports hall. Well done to all of them and thank you to Miss Clements for organising and encourage our pupils' participation!!

8

School Council – Cake Sale

Our fantastic School Council have planned a Cake Sale for Friday, after school, which has turned into quite an event and many pupils are excited about it! This was one of the activities planned as part of the Children's Mental Health Week and all the monies raised will be going to the local Food Bank.

To support the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, we are reviewing our procedures around food-related events, including our Cake Sale. As an added precaution, we ask that any pupil with a known food allergy does not purchase cakes from the bake sale unless they are accompanied by their parent or carer. This ensures that an adult who is fully aware of the child's specific allergens can help assess which items-if any-are safe for them.

Although all contributors to the bake sale may label ingredients clearly, we cannot guarantee that items will be free from cross-contamination or hidden allergens. To help us maintain a safe environment, please ensure that your child's allergy information is up to date with the school. If there have been any recent changes, or if you are unsure what we currently hold on record, please contact the school office so we can update our records accordingly. If you have any questions or concerns, we are more than happy to discuss individual arrangements.



Thank you very much for your understanding and support!!

9

Children's Mental Health Week

Thank you to our DMS community who braved the weather to participate in or volunteer at the Great Field Junior Parkrun on Sunday morning!!! What a great way to celebrate the start of Children's Mental Health Week. The organisers were praising our pupils' commitment and politeness. We can't wait to see you all at Parkrun again on Saturday!!!



Well done to our fabulous ROARS winners of last week! Great job showing our school values!



Year 5

Year 6



Year 7

Year 8



What else has been happening in our Community?

Visitors' Car Park (Coburg Road)

We would like to remind our school community that we have children in the PD Base who are wheelchair users and need extra room to descend and get in their parents' vehicles. Since the spaces in our visitors' car park are limited and destined for persons/agencies coming to the school for meetings or to work with the children and staff, we kindly ask our parents/carers not to park in the visitors' car park when dropping off or picking up the children at the beginning and end of the school day. We really appreciate your cooperation with this request, thank you very much in advance!!



Forest School

This week you would have received information for a paid after school club from the Forest School. If your child is interested, please book directly with them on the following link: [Primary Forest School - booking](#)

Science Lessons

Our Year 8 pupils, recently observed - a not for the faint hearted - hands-on lung dissection, with specimens kindly donated by Taylors Butchers in Wool. Mrs Daly, our resident science technician, expertly conducted the activity, helping students explore the structure and adaptations of the respiratory system. Students were able to feel the difference between the lung and liver tissue and explore some other organs, including the heart!!



12 And finally...

I hope everyone enjoys the February half term break and returns refreshed and ready for the second half of the Spring Term.

Mr Webb