

Dear DMS families,

It only takes one week of school to get into the full swing of routine again! This has been an exciting week as we welcomed the start of all 24 clubs that are running for our young people. Many pupils have signed up - some for the first time! I challenged pupils in assembly to make each day count and to grasp all opportunities that come their way! Well, they have been throwing themselves into these opportunities and hopefully will enjoy these extracurricular activities!

I for one am very excited to be running a Performing Arts club with Miss Cumber - focusing on working towards a summer musical of 'Aladdin' which will be shown over two nights at the Corn exchange. We have over 70 pupils signed up for this which is a great number! More information to follow soon! For these next couple of weeks it will be auditions for the main roles.

This week our school houses went head to head in a general knowledge quiz in assemblies - these were not only highly competitive, lively and fun, but informative and amusing! Watching pupils (as well as the teachers) cheer on their houses as they had to ping buzzers quickly to answer questions Mr Murray had set them!

We had a wonderful time last Friday celebrating our 'Fragility of Freedom' day at DMS - I do hope you have seen some of the amazing displays of work our pupils created in bringing this important day to life.

Mrs King

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Important dates for your diary

20th January	Book Looks for parents - Y5
24th January	PTFA Quiz Night
2nd to 8th February	Children's Mental Health Week - more information to follow
2nd February	Junior Park run - more information to follow
7th February	Non Uniform Day - Dress to express
17th to 21st February	Half term break

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After School Clubs

Clubs have started! If your child wishes they had signed up to a club and thinks it's too late - please do speak to the office - there may well be some spaces left. We encourage all our pupils to get involved in the many clubs that are on offer.

Clubs are a great way for pupils to meet other pupils from different year groups. This is healthy for them to bond and to feel even more settled in our school. Sports fixtures, performing arts clubs as well as musical bands help pupils to feel part of their wider school community. We have many school sports fixtures coming up, as well as Art competitions, the Reading and Sports Ambassador launches to name just a few.

Look out for these exciting additions to our school.

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Parent Question of the Week

What happened to the survey I completed for DMS?

We have collated all of the comments parents have made as well as your overall thoughts about DMS. We have actioned many of your suggestions or have answers to questions raised. Please do look out for this in your inbox and have a read. We have sent this out this week with a clear outline of what has been done following on from your helpful insight and comments from the survey. Thank you again for taking the time to complete this.

Pupil Question of the Week

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Can you tell me a bit more about what a 'Trusted adult' is?

A trusted adult is a staff member in our school who you would feel comfortable to talk with. If you were unsure about something, worried, concerned or needed to share something that might be sensitive - you would go to this person. Sometimes a trusted adult might be your tutor, teacher, Mrs King or Mr Webb. It might be the medical officer or office team. Every member of our school community is always ready to listen, help and support you in the best way they can - please take some time to think and ask yourself - Who is my trusted adult in school?

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Children's Mental Health Week - 3rd to 9th February 2025

As you may be aware, Children's Mental Health Week runs from **3rd – 9th February**. This year's theme is 'Know Yourself: Grow Yourself' and links with the film Inside Out 2. We will be marking the week in a variety of ways including assemblies and a Drop Down Lesson on Tuesday (Lesson 5).

On Friday, in exchange for a minimum of £1, we will be inviting the children to '**Dress to Express**' so that they can celebrate what makes them unique. The children are invited to substitute **an item** of their uniform for something that represents what makes them who they are. This could be through their favourite hobby, colour, sport or accessory. All money raised will go to Miss Easton and Miss Ashley's project 'Stampede by the Sea' so we can help generate funds for Weldmar Hospicecare, who provide specialist end of life care for local adults with a life limiting illness, and support for their loved ones. The project is designed to break down the stigma around talking to children about bereavement and death (the elephant in the room). The baby elephant that we have adopted has been decorated and is looking rather fabulous! He will be part of the Art Trail in West Dorset in the next few weeks.

Also, it would be amazing if as many members of our school community as possible can participate in **The Great Fields Parkrun** on the **2nd and 8th February**. Either come along to the Sunday Junior Parkrun (2km) on the 2nd or the Saturday Parkrun (5km) on the 8th or how about both of them if you are feeling particularly energetic? All we ask is that the children wear their DMS PE T-Shirt/Hoodie so that they stand out. A letter with additional information about this event will follow next week.

I look forward to seeing you at The Great Field on the 2nd and/or 8th February!

Fiona Ray
Mental Health Lead

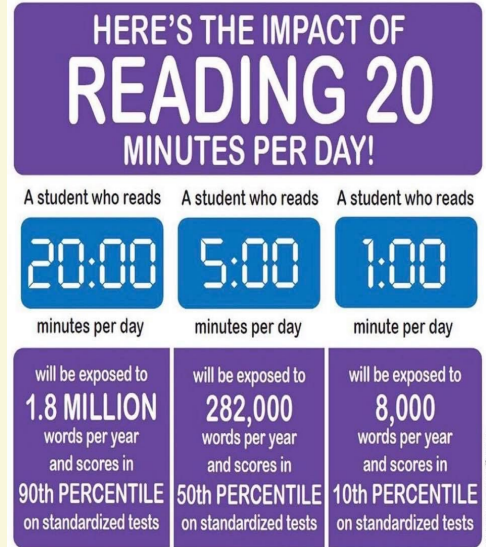
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Reading News - Mrs James

At Dorchester Middle School, everyone is a reader!! This is because reading allows us to develop the most important skills and qualities required to be successful both across all subject areas in school and in our future lives.

Research has proven that engagement with reading is the biggest indicator of success in later life and is the most important element in developing our cognitive function. It makes us as people literate, articulate, well-informed and empathetic – all essential qualities for success and happiness!

As such, reading forms a large part of our homework policy: the expectation of a pupil is to read at home for twenty minutes at least five times per week. Reading for twenty minutes regularly has a massive impact, so please do encourage your child to read at home to “take 20 and read plenty!”



Celebrations

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Well done to our pupils who have been picked to display their work at the Holocaust Memorial day at the Corn Exchange.

Our Local mayor and MPs chose our pupils work of art at our ‘Fragility of Freedom’ event last week and were moved by how these pupils depicted the importance of freedom and the way they used their gifts to raise awareness of issues such as slavery, racism, refugees and the muting of voices.

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We are very proud to inform you that DMS have once again excelled in this year’s Young Rotary Artist competition. We submitted a total of 38 entries this year on the theme of ‘Wonderful Water’. In the Junior class competition, we scooped all of the top three prizes!

- 1st prize Emma D
- 2nd prize Ohana D
- 3rd prize Riley P-E

In the Intermediate class:

- 1st Belle N
- 2nd Joanna T

Belle and Emma’s art work will now go forward to the district final for the next round of judging. This is a fantastic result for our talented DMS young artists!!!

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At the end of last term, we heard that Laura M from 5MA got awarded the Behaviour medal for consistently showing excellent behaviour and positive attitude to learning at the Premier Education After School Dance Club at DMS. Laura has also won an achievement at Stagecoach this term for extra effort in Dance. Well done Laura!!



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PTFA News

The next event planned by our PTFA is the Quiz night, to be held on Friday 24th January from 6pm (6.30pm start).

Tickets will be available on the School Gateway app or pay on the door (card payments will be accepted). £5 per team, maximum of 6 per team. Don’t forget to sign up your teams!

The PTFA will introduce an option of a hot meal to pre order, more information to follow.



ROARS

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This week we have been holding house competitions and showing our AMBITION through a general knowledge quiz in assemblies. These have been so much fun! Pupils have been answering quick fire questions around curriculum subjects as well as general knowledge and facts about Dorchester! So far, at the last count, LeBron house was in the lead, with the other houses close behind! Final results will be shared next week and more competitions will be held soon.

What's happening in our community?

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KS2 were visited by the Railway safety team today to discuss how to stay safe around train lines as well as travel safely. There were helpful videos, activities and discussion times to share the important message of staying safe. This is part of our school's PSHE curriculum. All our pupils in KS2 participated brilliantly!!!



Please can we remind our parents and carers that we have a big amount of lost property still in the school. We have coats, PE hoodies and bags, school jumpers, shoes, water bottles and more! We will be putting all of this out in the Reception area, every Wednesday and Thursday and next Monday 20th January, on the Year 5 corridor from 3:30 to 4:30pm. Please do come over and collect your children's belongings. After half term, what is left will be given to the PTFA for their second hand uniform summer sale (more information to follow).

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And finally...

My 13 year old son and I wanted to read a book together in the evening. It's something we did during his primary years but it stopped when he moved to secondary school. I asked our school Librarian, Mrs Jeffery for some suggestions. She recommended a book that was relevant to his age. We are now regularly reading together for pleasure in the evenings before he goes to bed. Reading with your child is a great way to slow down, to bond and to find time to talk with them about their day. It's sometimes easy to think that teenagers only want to spend their time on phones or game consoles - but they need to share with you their day, their concerns and highlights.

Reading also helps us as adults to take time to stop and listen. I encourage you to ask your child to get a book from the library for you both to read together and if they don't know what one to choose - Mrs Jeffery knows some real page turners!

Mrs King