

Dear DMS families,

It is an exciting time to be a pupil at Dorchester Middle School - there is so much on offer in addition to the great learning in our classrooms.

This term we are offering around 30 clubs each week covering a variety of interests. At present we have 298 pupils registered for clubs which is absolutely fantastic!

This week some of our pupils have been learning about democracy. On Wednesday and Thursday of this week pupils from Years 6,7 & 8 went to Dorchester County Hall. There are some fantastic photos on our facebook page.

Next week we are supporting Children's Mental Health Week with assemblies from outside speakers and a special afternoon of activities planned by Mrs Ray. Don't forget to join us at the Junior Park Run this Sunday (2nd February).

Bournemouth University are visiting us on Tuesday afternoon to work with Year 8. Their presentation around 'Options and Choices' will encourage our senior pupils to start thinking about their next steps. We will be running our first ever KS3 Careers Week at the end of March, designed to inspire and encourage our pupils to think about their future selves and what they would like to do as a future career. Throughout the rest of the year, we will be inviting representatives from different employment sectors to come in and give our pupils an insight to their roles. If you would like to be involved in any of our careers input, please do get in touch with me.

Mrs Hammonds

dhammonds@dmsschool.co.uk

2

Important dates for your diary

2nd to 8th February	Children's Mental Health Week
2nd February	Junior Park run - 8:55am - Great Field Poundbury
7th February	Dress to express - children invited to change ONE item of uniform on the day
8th February	Park run
17th to 21st February	Half term break
6th March	World Book Day
24th to 28th March	KS3 Careers Week
28th March	SEND Coffee morning for parents/carers

3

Information for Parents/Carers

The online booking system for our clubs will open again from 3pm on the 31st January to 3 pm on the 7th February. Following that they will be closed for the remainder of the term, with the exception of Homework Club. Homework Club meets in the ICT Suite every Tuesday from 3.30 - 4.30pm and is run by Mrs Young. The purpose of this club is to offer a quiet space for pupils who find it difficult to get their homework done at home. They can ask for help and advice or use the computers to access online work. We will return to having an additional session on a Wednesday after February half term, but are unable to run the second evening at the moment.

If you have any queries about clubs please get in touch with the School Office or Mrs Hammonds. We will follow the end of club arrangements you provide when booking the club. Should you need to change these arrangements for any reason, please write a note in your child's Home School Diary so they can show the club leader. If the changes are permanent, please notify the office so the system can be updated.

4

Parent Question of the Week

How much homework should my child be doing each week?

In Years 5 & 6 pupils should receive homework in English and Maths every week. In addition to this, pupils should be reading regularly at home and we would ask that you listen to them read in order to support this. In Years 7 & 8 pupils are expected to complete homework in English, Maths, Science and MfL every week.

Humanities set termly projects for KS3.

All homework tasks should be written in Home School Diaries during lessons, as this will help everyone to meet deadlines. If you know your child struggles to find a quiet place at home to complete homework, you can contact us to book a place in our weekly homework club, which meets on a Tuesday. We may request that your child join homework club if they are not managing to hand homework in on time as a matter of course.

5

Pupil Question of the Week

When will I get the chance to be an office helper?

Our Year 8 pupils have the opportunity to be office helpers for the day as part of their role as senior pupils in the school. Two pupils are selected each day to carry out various administrative and organisational tasks to support the work of the school office, from delivering messages to teachers and pupils, producing resources, taking visitors on tours to returning items of lost property. The staff really appreciate their hard work and its great to see our pupils taking on these responsible roles.

6

Children's Mental Health Week

Next week, Dorchester Middle School will be acknowledging Children's Mental Health Week with a series of activities within school. As a school, we are launching the week by taking part in The Great Field's Junior Parkrun on **Sunday 2nd February at 8:55am**. It would be brilliant to see as many of our school community as possible at the Parkrun events. You don't have to be a runner, walking is welcomed/encouraged! Who is going to join us on Sunday??

Dress to express - 7th February: We would like to clarify that during the Children's Mental Health Week the pupils are invited to 'Dress to Express' on **Friday 7th February**, by substituting an item of their uniform, for something creative to express themselves, in exchange for £1 per child. This is to support a local Mental Health Charity - Stampede by the Sea, Weldmar Hospice. This will **not** be a non-uniform day, the children are invited to swap just **one** item of the school uniform. We can't wait to see what they come up with!!



The week began with the National Holocaust Memorial Day and so during both KS2 and KS3 Library Book Talk, we looked at various books set during World War Two, which reflected the lives and experiences of Jewish people in countries invaded by Germany. *Code Name Kingfisher* is set both in Holland in 1942 and in present day Britain. It tells the story of Mila and her sister Hansie who go to live with another Dutch family to hide their Jewish identities and of Hansie's growing involvement with a resistance group.

Our KS3 book group read it last year and enjoyed it so much that they nominated it as their entry for the Wessex Amazing Book Award. *After the War* by the very popular author, Tom Palmer explores the true story of 300 orphans from Auschwitz who were taken to the Lake District to begin their recovery. The library also has a copy of Anne Frank's diary as well as some shorter stories and factual books.

Celebrations

Our Y8s Basketball team did us proud this week, in a match vs St Osmunds. In Mr Roberts' very poetic words: "The cruel wind that prevailed on this distinctly winter's after non did little to temper our senior year's efforts. Individual glory is insignificant when compared to team effort and togetherness. Cian led from the front, advancing across the boards with high spirits. Marcus hustled and stole whilst Lewis was his ubiquitous self. All boys were a credit to the school-it was a delight to be part of their journey."



This week our Y8 pupil's work was displayed in the Dorchester Library, following the very successful Exhibit "The Fragility of Freedom". The work was so highly appreciated that instead of being returned to us on Tuesday, they asked if they could keep it until today, to be displayed in the foyer!



Attendance

Thank you to all the parents and carers for making sure that your children are in school on time and for working with the school to improve our overall attendance. It has been a cold and long January! This term we will be focusing on lateness and the importance of arriving at school on time.

Punctuality supports routine, structure, social interaction with peers, friendships and helps to create a calm learning environment for all pupils when they are on time for lessons.

Mrs Stewart Pope - Attendance Officer

We continue to celebrate our pupils who have our core ROARS values present in everything they do around the school.

Well done to our year 7 school values winners this week!



What's happening in our community?

What a brilliant week our pupils have had!! On Wednesday our prefects visited County Hall to experience what is like to work for the local government. They learned interviewing techniques and posing questions to council workers!



On Wednesday a group of Y6 and 7 visited County Hall again, for Democracy Day, and today our Student Council were lucky enough to take the train to London to visit the Houses of Parliament.

A lot more photos and information of all these activities in our FB page!!



And finally...

On Thursday afternoon we practised our first fire drill routine of 2025. It is important to carry out these drills as they help everyone in our school community feel confident and safe. I'm happy to say that everyone evacuated the buildings swiftly and smoothly, walking in single file and silence to assemble on the field. As ever, we reminded our pupils of the importance of remaining silent during the drill - they did a great job!

Remember to have another look at our clubs list over the next week.

I hope you all have a great weekend and get outside to enjoy the fresh air - maybe at the Park Run!

Mrs Hammonds