



Dorset
Studio School
Newsletter Spring 2023



Bringing learning to life

Spring term signals the arrival of lambs. Our Year 9 students have the opportunity to be directly involved in helping deliver and care for the lambs and ewes.



▲ Message from the Principal

BACK TO SCHOOL OFFERS!

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to you at the end of what has proven to be another busy yet successful term.

Students have been involved in a huge range of trips and visits, many related to our specialism, others reflecting our commitment to our 'Most Able Programme', some being reward trips for students who have worked incredibly hard, and finally those which are sporting occasions provided by our PE department. It is so heart-warming to witness the gradual return of events which were commonplace before the pandemic.

On that note, I would like to extend a special 'back to school' offer to all parents and carers!

Recent parents' evenings have reminded us all how nice it is to meet face to face! I am so pleased to recall that attendance at these evenings has been particularly positive (and growing) with approximately three quarters of all parents attending. Prior to the pandemic, approximately nine out of ten parents and carers attended these events. If you haven't yet

got back into the habit of coming in to school, please do visit us to talk about your child. These occasions provide a unique opportunity to strengthen our partnerships.

We have arranged a timetable of new events to welcome parents and carers back in to school. This will help you to better understand our provision, and also enable us to have a chance to talk about the students! Please take a close look at the table included within. I hope that there is something that you will find helpful. If not, and if you have suggestions, please do let us know!

Feedback from recent parents' evenings has been so positive, but crucially they have also provided opportunities to share knowledge in a manner which otherwise may not have happened.

Please do take a look at the initial list of events. It would be great to see you at one of them.

In the meantime, we look forward to another productive term. There will be end of year exams and assessments for each year group. The results of these will provide a useful steer in terms of determining groups and classes for next year. Our year 11 students will be taking their

public GCSE examinations. We wish them much good fortune and encourage them to prepare as thoroughly as is possible.

With sports day and a foreign trip also scheduled next term, there will be plenty to keep us all busy.

Thank you all once again for your unwavering strong support. It is always lovely to hear and read your kind words.

Yours sincerely

P A Green
Principal

▲ Maths

World Mathematics Day

On Tuesday, 14th March 2023, Dorset Studio School celebrated World Mathematics Day with a totally different Maths lesson.





During the lesson the Year 9 pupils had to work out the volume of different sections of logs. The logs had been donated to the School by Tilbury Douglas Construction, after they were felled by Knighton Countryside Management (KCM) at the former Damers First School on the West Annex Hospital Site. The logs were then chipped by KCM's 800hp self-propelled chipper, the largest in Dorset. The chips were then packed into dumpy bags and again the pupils worked out the volume of the chip collected in each bag. Later the chips were spread out on the school's playground.



Members of staff from Knighton Countryside Management were in attendance, including Ben Gibbens, a past pupil and now director of KCM. Phoebe Gale from Tilbury Douglas

Construction was also there to witness the lesson and watch the students putting their mathematical theories into practice.

Ben Gibbens said, 'It is great that an 800hp, 35 tonne machine can be used as a Maths resource.'

Phoebe Gale of Tilbury Douglas said, "Tilbury Douglas are excited to be supporting local education providers in our communities as part of our projects for the NHS and Dorset County Hospital Trust. It was a lovely afternoon and a great opportunity to see the pupils learn from the timber measuring exercise and the school benefit from 25 tonnes of wood chip that we donated with our partners at Knighton Countryside Management."



This style of teaching that involves employer engagement projects, is a true reflection of the school's unique ethos which strengthens learning and prepares students for life.

▲ English

Young Writers Competition

At the start of this term, four of our students entered The Power of Poetry competition and... they are all being published! Certificates and letters will be sent home and Literacy Goals awarded, but please also congratulate the following students along with me...

Grace G (7N)
Amelia C (9N)
Mia W (7N)
Lily E (7N)

DASP Collaborative Writing Event – Thomas Hardy School

As part of our "Most Able Provision", 9 of our KS3 students joined a day of collaborative writing, working in teams with students from across the area ranging from Year 1 all the way up to Year 13! An excerpt from one of the stories, written with Indimay B and Sophie R (Year 7) is below. Enjoy!

When I woke up that morning, I felt completely different; I feel



as if I have holes torn into me, like wind is coming in and out of my vessel. There was a feeling of sharpness in my arm and in my brain, like a screwdriver had been pierced into my insides. My limp hand felt along my stomach, feeling muddled stitches holding my guts and skeleton upright. I could barely move my muscles, metal chains stopping my circulation; I am Frankenstein. I'm scared- I can't go to work like this!

I tiptoed through the spooky house I had woken up in, avoiding all the broken glass and scuttling rats. Suddenly, I heard rattling bones creeping behind me. I froze in terror. However, I feel relieved at the sight of a yapping dog (with no skin) chasing a butterfly out the door. In an ecstatic mood, the dog bounded and jumped at the colourful insect. Very carefully, I caught the poor creature and released it to its freedom, and despite my immortal dog biting at my leg I carry on to the hospital.

Unfortunately, I forgot that I had a brain surgery to perform, recklessly rushing into the operating theatre I was due at, ignoring the bewildered stares of my assistants. Instantly, I was bombarded with the thunderous, unbearable scream of a trumpet, alike to a witches'

cackle; the patient was playing the brass instrument during his operation! I broke out into a quick sprint away but became confused that I was not going anywhere; I was just spinning! I was imprisoned in a revolving door, unable to distinguish the exit. As I passed out, I saw a red and white stripy top hat.

As I regained consciousness, I hazily made out a shiny goldfish and a glimpse of cartoonish blue and red. I was surrounded in darkness and a bright circle of a world shone above me. I sprang out of what seemed to be a ringed top hat like a superman and held my hands in front of my face - I saw two flat, exaggerated gloved paws. "You must be joking; I feel like I'm choking!" I exclaimed in shock, touching my straw-like neck and thick, velvety bow. "This must be one of my dreams, but how real it seems!" I rushed to a warped and misshaped mirror and saw a gigantic white and black feline. "Oh, darn and blast, am I stuck here? Oh well, oh well - the end is near!"

▲ Animal Care

In Animal Care the year 9 students have been learning about the care of horses. They have been using the 4 ponies in the animal park to learn how to put on headcollars and how to



tie them up correctly in a quick release knot. This is important to ensure the safety of both horse and handler. They have been given a range of brushes to use on the ponies for grooming and shown the correct method to pick out their feet to remove mud and stones which could cause lameness. They then learnt how to lead the ponies around the park safely and put them back in their field for the evening. After this the hay nets were tied up for them in the field shelter so that the ponies could access the feed during the evening.

▲ Forest School

Progress and achievement in forest school has taken several guises this term. The team have seen friendships built through team working on collectively designed tasks. What started as



a simple den building challenge evolved to the construction of doors, picket fences and a Fox Den sign painted with natural paint made from rocks crushed with a mallet. (A wonderful preparation for geology unit in the land based qualification.)

The spring term has seen the emergence of specialists in practical skills. These are those children who have mastered a practical skill to the extent they are not only passing their skill onto others as peer teachers, but also taking on the challenge of bushcraft techniques. Riley, Lily and Nyah have been relentless in their pursuit of lighting the campfire using natural tinder. Their repertoire included silver birch bark, King Alfred Cakes

fungus and Old Man's Beard (wild clematis seeds.)

It's not been surprising to see how popular camp fire cooking has become with our year 7s. Collaboration and communication (in varying accents for pure entertainment) have seen the camp fire menu expand to include leek and potato soup, spaghetti bolognese and mulled apple juice but by far the most popular has been campfire pizzas with wild garlic.

Gracie and Eliza have been leading the development of the use of bladed hand tools at Pigeon House wood. It's been particularly brilliant to observe how ideas have evolved from week to week. This has resulted in refined greenwood products.



▲ Land Based Studies

Spring term is always a term we look forward to as it signals the arrival of lambs. Our year 9 students have been getting literally stuck in helping deliver and care for the lambs and ewes. Here Henry is keeping the ewe in place so our farm manager David Cotterell can help a stuck lamb. Arthur is playing his part by keeping her first lamb close by to reduce her stress levels.



It also provides the opportunity to practice livestock feeding and health checks which is an assessed part of the land based course. This also involves feeding the orphan lambs which is always a popular job.

In the classroom, both year 9 and 10 land based students have been developing their evaluation skills through a process of dissecting information and then reconstructing it in response to exam style questions. Between them they have delved into



agricultural pollution and the debate around the use of technology in dairy farming.

▲ Humanities

It has been another busy term in the Humanities department with students working on a range of topics and school-based projects. I would like to give a special mention to those year 10 students studying BTEC Travel and Tourism. Over the past 3 weeks they have worked tirelessly on their synoptic coursework. This accounts for 30% of their overall grade. Despite having two tasks remaining, pupils have applied their learning under formally supervised conditions and are to be applauded for their attitude and commitment to this endeavour.

Similarly, Year 9 Travel & Tourism students have also been working on assessment projects. 9E in particular produced some stunning professional looking brochures whilst researching the appeal of seaside towns, countryside areas and cultural/historical towns and cities (see image).

Year 7 and 8 students studying Philosophy and Ethics have produced a lovely wall display for the classroom as a result of investigating the importance of

rules; at home, at school and in wider society. This research culminated in students applying the importance of rules to the KMC site where they produced work designed to highlight the importance of rules around their immediate environment. A special mention goes to Emi McC, Elena CI and David E of 8E who produced noteworthy thoughtful and beautifully presented work.



Sadly, our Year 8 students studying the industrial and agricultural revolution in their humanities lessons had their visit to the Shire Hall Museum in Dorchester postponed as some members of the museum staff had Covid. We look forward to visiting the museum in the summer term when DSS students will look to celebrate the bravery of the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Finally, as our Year 11 GCSE Geography students prepare relentlessly for their forthcoming summer exams we would like to thank all parents and carers for their continued support. Our students have worked incredibly hard over the past term as they come towards the end of their Geography syllabus and engage in a detailed revision and testing programme designed to maximise attainment in the coming months. Well done to all!

Mr Dearden (Head of Humanities)

▲ Arts

Theatre workshop

Dorset Studio School arts students in year 7 and 8 were given the opportunity this term in conjunction with the Wessex partnership schools to be involved in a theatre workshop 'A Theatre Show in a Day' hosted at the Thomas Hardy School in Dorchester. The students worked with Rhona McGregor who trained at the University of Southampton and Guildford School of Acting and has performed in a variety of shows including The Addams Family, Legally Blonde, Billy Elliot to name a few, along with a group of three other professional singers and performers who are currently performing in London's West End, and who have similar notable



credits to their names.

Our 12 students had previously rehearsed four theatre songs in readiness to stage the evening show and perform it in day along with other schools. They had to work very hard all day! There was a q and a session where the performers answered the students' questions and were very honest about their advice to anyone who might want to work in the world of musical theatre. The main message they wanted the students to understand was to follow your dream, and don't ever give up as that may offer other opportunities and always work hard!

The students performed their work in the evening to an audience of families and everyone was treated to performances by the professionals, which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. Dorset Studio students were amazing ambassadors for the school and worked very hard all day and evening. They should be very proud of their work.

Rotary Young Artist Competition

Rachel Wilson from Rotary Club of Casterbridge contacted us to share the results of this local art competition.

"I absolutely loved the chance to

see the works in person and am pleased to announce the results for your school (we had 75 entries in all from 4 schools).

Megan F - 2nd prize - The Judges' comments are: Love the graphic approach created with bands of colour to create a sunset fade across the sky. The detail of the fauna in the foreground and trees on the horizon is very impressive creating a sense of depth to the picture. Great effort!

We also have commendations for:

Kyla H - Commendation from judges: Stunning use of colour and fade to create that perfect blue to purple, dusky sky. The beautiful silhouette of a horse in the foreground, is very detailed and in proportion, not easy to draw. The splattering of white flecks across the sky depicts the perfect chilly, winters night scene. Fantastic work.

Daisy M - commendation: Lovely composition with the sun peeping through the silhouette of the reeds in the foreground. Great detail with added sense of depth. A lovely bold piece of artwork, well done."

▲ Easter holiday opportunity

Have you heard of the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF)

Program? It's a FREE day of activity with a hot food provision, accessible to all children who receive free school meals.

Join on a cycling and climbing adventure at Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre this Easter.

Thursday 13th April

Improve your cycling skills and learn the basics of bike maintenance with Sustrans, the active travel people! There will be a refreshment pit stop as you blend fruits on the Smoothie Bike, turning your pedal power into a blender machine.

Lunch is provided by The Nest, Weymouth, and will consist of a jacket potato with a 'toppings and salad bar' to create your own tasty combinations with a tray bake for dessert.

Explore your balancing skills and test your head for heights in the afternoon on our traverse wall, climbing tower and indoor tunnel system.

FREE with a HAF Passcode
Full day of activity 09:30 – 16:30
Lunch Included

Please bring along your own bike if you have one, but don't worry if you don't or can't; we have a selection of bikes that you can use on the day.



To book, please email woec@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk with the subject line 'HAF' requesting the number of places required for your child/children and the date of your activity. Upon receipt, you will be emailed back a HAF Consent Form (online) requiring a mandatory field for your HAF passcode to be entered. One consent form requires completing per child. You will have 48 hours to complete this form before your space allocation is released to another parent/guardian. If you do not have computer access, please phone us for further assistance 01305784927.

▲ Safeguarding - Online Safety Update

TikTok

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok. Some of the videos on TikTok may not be appropriate for your child to view and there is also the risk of strangers contacting your child. If your child is using TikTok then make sure the appropriate security/privacy settings are on.

Account set up - By default, accounts for people under 16 are set to private at the start and we would recommend keeping it as this. This means your child can approve follower requests. You can read more about the

other settings available (such as switching off comments and switching on restricted mode) here: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/account-privacy-settings>

Inappropriate content, themes and challenges on TikTok - Whilst against TikTok's guidelines, explicit and inappropriate content can be found on this platform, for example nudity/sexual content and hate speech. We often see viral challenges on TikTok, some of which can be dangerous. If your child is using TikTok, chat to them regularly about what they are viewing and to ensure they know not to try challenges they see online.

Family Pairing - This allows you to link your own account to your child's account. You can then set controls such as restricted mode (limit the appearance of content that may not be appropriate) and screen time management. You can find out more here: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/guardians-guide/>

Blocking and Reporting - Ensure your child knows how to use the safety features available to them. You can find out more here: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/report-a-problem>

Bullying on TikTok - This article makes suggestions on

appropriate settings as well as how to deal with bullying: <https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en-sg/bullying-prevention/>

Tech Tips Live with Parent Zone - You can watch back this 13-minute broadcast from Parent Zone (originally broadcast Jan 2023) which discusses what you need to know if your child is using TikTok. It's an excellent overview including how algorithms work on social media. You can access it here: <https://parentzone.org.uk/tech-tips-live>

Snapchat - Family Centre: New Feature

Snapchat launched Family Centre last year, which includes features such as allowing you to see who your child is friends with on Snapchat and who they have been communicating with (you will not be able to see the contents of conversations). Snapchat have now announced their latest feature for Family Centre - Content Controls.

Content controls will allow you to limit the type of content your child can watch on Snapchat by filtering out stories. You can find out how to set this new feature up here:

<https://values.snap.com/en-GB/news/introducing-content-controls-onfamily-center>



Sendit

Sendit is an add-on app to Snapchat and it allows users to play games together. Sendit state on their website that the app is not intended for children under the age of 13. The games include Q&A games including ask me anything. A user asks a question and players can respond anonymously. As with any anonymous element, there is an increased risk of cyberbullying. The app does contain in-app purchases ranging from £0.99 to £29.99. There is also a weekly subscription service available, which provides users with enhanced features. It costs £8.49 per week. Ensure payment details are not stored/accessible on your child's device to avoid unexpected bills. If you know that your child is using this app (and they are underage) then you can contact Sendit to ask them to disable their account. For further information, go to <https://www.getsendit.com/parents>

Technology for "real world" safety - Hollie Guard App

This app allows you to keep an eye on your child while they are traveling using the Journey feature. Whenever they use this feature, their emergency contacts are informed when they have arrived at their destination. With the free version, users

can also use this app to get help quickly if they are in danger. If a user is in danger, they hold down the button for 5 seconds to raise an alert, which activates Hollie Guard and automatically sends their location to their designated contacts. Visit their website for further information: <https://hollieguard.com/>

▲ Key dates for the summer term

(Dates in purple are part of our In-school Parent & Carer Events)

Monday 17th April – First day of summer term

► Tuesday 25th April – KS4 Vocational Qualification Information Evening (Year 9)

Monday 1st May – Bank holiday

Monday 8th May – Bank holiday to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III

► Tuesday 9th May – KS4 Careers and Wellbeing Information Evening (Years 10 & 11)

Monday 15th May to Thursday 22nd June - GCSE exam series (Year 11)

► Wednesday 24th May – Supporting Literacy Information Evening (Years 7-9)

Monday 29th May to Friday 2nd June – Half term holiday

► Wednesday 7th June – Friends of Dorset Studio School meeting (all year groups)

► Tuesday 13th June – KS3 Wellbeing Information Evening (Years 7-9)

Wednesday 14th June – Sports Day

► Tuesday 20th June – Years 7 & 8 Progress Celebration Evening

Monday 26th June to Friday 30th June – French trip

► Tuesday 27th June – Year 9 Progress Celebration / Transition to KS4 Information Evening

Monday 3rd July to Friday 7th July – Year 10 Work Experience week & Year 9 Introduction to Work Experience afternoons

► Tuesday 4th July – Year 10 Progress Celebration / Preparing for Year 11 Information Evening

Friday 7th July – End of summer term for all pupils

► If you would like to request additional information or have a suggestion for a future In-school Parent & Carer Event, please email paul.chapman@dorsetstudioschool.co.uk