

# Summer Newsletter - July 2024



**Dorset**  
Studio School

**A unique setting for the study of  
Environmental Science**



### ► Message from the Principal

Dear Parent / Carer,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce you to our final newsletter this academic year. We all have much to be proud of.

For example, during the course of this year we have taken students on over thirty different school trips, with the focus ranging from the arts to humanities, the environmental science specialism to the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and watersports activities to University visits. I am so grateful to our staff for providing these wonderful activities for a huge range of different students.

Other firsts have included the provision of mental health workshops for staff, students and parents. We held our Christmas concert at the Stinsford Parish Church for the first time and we enjoyed our first ever Awards Evening in October.

It would be remiss not to mention our successful OFSTED inspection in March. We are incredibly proud of a report which reads extremely well, but we recognise that we can always do more. We will.

It's at this time of year when some staff move on to pastures new. We are fortunate to have

a very low turnover of staff, and a team who really enjoy working here - but it is always good that staff move on when the time is right for them. Two staff retire this year, those being Mrs Harris and Mrs Kepple. They have both been nothing short of the consummate professionals. The education profession has been lucky to benefit from their willingness to go the extra mile and to give selflessly to others. We will really miss them, but wish them well. I'm sure we'll be able to encourage them back from time to time!

Miss Sibley and Mr Remmer move on to other schools. Both have been supported to follow courses which prepare them for senior leadership. I am delighted to note that they have both secured promoted posts. They are fantastic team players and experts in their respective fields. They are the future of the profession. We thank them and wish them much further success.

And finally, Mr Fox has chosen to take some time away from teaching. He has been working hard to complete a PhD, which he began seven years ago! He is hopeful that this time will provide him the space to finally get this over the line. He has made a very real contribution to the lives of many of our young people, particularly in the Upper School. He is a character that

many will look back upon with fondness and gratitude in their later lives I am sure.

I am pleased to note that we continue to maintain specialist teachers in all areas and we have once again completed a successful recruitment campaign. We look forward to building on these successes next year. There is plenty still to do!

I wish you all a relaxing and pleasant summer – if and when it finally arrives!

Mr Green  
Principal

### ► DofE Bronze trip report



On Monday 1st of July, 14 year 10 students assembled at Kingston Maurward to start their practise day and camp prior to their Bronze Expedition on the Tuesday 2nd to Wednesday the 3rd of July. This trip was an entirely off-grid experience as the students were



not allowed their mobile phones. Some chose to hand them in to staff and others braved leaving them at home for 3 full days - no Snap-streaks in sight!

On their practise day they re-capped First Aid, Trangia cooking safety, basic navigation skills and map-reading and hiked a total of 10km with nearly full packs. They were accompanied for this practise day by our two leader-assessors from Hampshire Outdoors with Mr Brown and I checking in on them at various points!

They got a little lost in Puddletown woods when navigating themselves, but successfully navigated their way back to camp which was in the Orchard on the Kingston Maurward site.

On arrival at the camp, they cooked dinner in groups of 2 or 3 and pitched their tents. After a warm shower and a few ball games and card games they finally got some much needed sleep!

Day two was a leisurely 7:30am wake-up with the aim of cooking breakfast, showering if required and striking camp by 9:30 to start hiking at 10:00am. They managed to leave on time and set off with their amazing safety phones (1 per team) which only made calls, carrying ALL their

equipment – tents, Trangias, personal kit and food.



(The amazing mobiles!)

Both groups made their first checkpoints in good time and were met every 20 to 30 minutes by the Hampshire Outdoors assessors or DSS staff along their routes. With relatively few navigational errors, all arrived back by 6pm having successfully completed their 6 hours of required activity for the day.



After cooking a variety of carbohydrate-heavy meals and pitching their tents, the groups planned their day 2 routes and collapsed into bed, ready for an early start on day 3!

They were rudely awakened by the staff at 06:30am and set off hiking at 8:30am to ensure they were back at school in good time for the buses at 4pm. Day 3 was tough and the students had to dig deep to maintain morale. After some minor navigational mistakes, which were mainly due to hard-to-spot paths that were somewhat overgrown, all the students wearily arrived back at school by 3:30pm and checked-in with the staff.



All-in-all it was an amazing 3-days, the students excelled themselves hiking 42km over the 3 days and passing their Bronze DofE Expedition. Congratulations to all the students who took part in the 3-days – I look forward to seeing you all in September when we will arrange a time to give out your awards! Thank-you to all the students for their brilliant efforts



and to Hampshire Outdoors for their invaluable support!

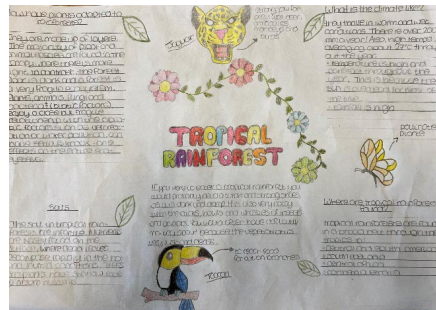
If you are in year 8 and are considering DofE as your option in year 9, please see Mrs O'Kelly and Mr Brown in September when we will hold an information briefing detailing all of the sections you need to complete towards your DofE prior to partaking in the final expedition.

► Humanities Review

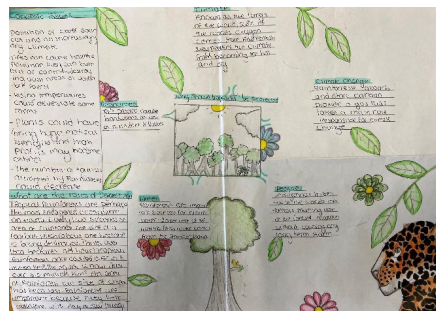
As we draw towards the end of another very busy term the Humanities team can reflect on an exceptionally positive few months. Congratulations go to all year 11 students who sat three GCSE Geography papers this summer and who worked tirelessly in preparation for their exams. I would like to thank Mr. O'Brien for tirelessly helping to prepare our students so thoroughly for the summer exam series. We look forward to celebrating with year 11 students on GCSE results day - Thursday 22nd August.

Year 10 students have also had a very busy term, with Travel & Tourism students working towards their Component 2 synoptic BTEC coursework. Their practical activity will take place in October/November and represents 30% of their overall grade in this subject. In addition, year 10 Geography

students have sat their end of year mock examinations and have completed their fieldwork data collection at Lyme Regis and Dorchester's Brewery Square (see separate article).



Year 9 students have also had a productive end to the year as they have already begun their actual GCSE Geography course, studying their first unit on 'The Living World'. Students have learnt about small and large ecosystems with a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities in tropical rainforests and hot deserts.



Some outstanding work was completed on the adaptations of plants and animals in these complex biomes with noteworthy pieces of work produced by

Alesha Waddington and Fleur Everett who both demonstrated a high level of understanding, constructing project work of an exceptionally high calibre.

Year 9 students continued their induction into GCSE Geography during the recent transition days at our Poundbury site. They were also introduced to BTEC Travel & Tourism which they will all be studying from September. In preparation for their new vocational course, students have been asked to keep a journal detailing a specific day trip or holiday that they experience during the summer break. Specifically, they need to focus on; Method of transport, type of accommodation (if applicable), choice of destination, food & drink and activities undertaken. This creates an excellent starting point for the BTEC Travel & Tourism course.

Students in year 8 have also been working on their end of year exams in their Humanities lessons, whilst Year 7 produced some excellent map work as they continue to develop their skills in





preparation for their Geography GCSE at Key Stage 4.

In Philosophy & Ethics year 8 students have been studying British Values and the concept of democracy in the run up to the General Election on 4th July. They were challenged to form their own political parties, create a manifesto and had a mock election. I would like to say a huge well done to all of the participants.

Overall it has been a fabulous year and everyone in the Humanities team would like to wish all of our students a safe and restful summer. We look forward to seeing all of you at the start of the Autumn term.

Mr Dearden (Head of Humanities).

### ► Geography Field Trip



One of the highlights of the geography course is fieldwork day when students are out of classroom, collecting primary data to use to prove or disprove

their learning question

Lyme Regis was the location for the Physical fieldwork

“How effective is hard and soft engineering in protecting Lyme Regis?”

Students used their skills on a Likert scale, looked at the Powers roundness scale, when measuring pebbles. They used satsumas to measure long shore drift and drew annotated sketch maps.

Many students lost their ice-creams from a bombardment from the air from seagulls. Mr Dearden was seen crying when he lost his ham and cheese sandwich – students were reported as saying they saw one of the gulls smiling and giving high fives to his seagull mates

The urban fieldwork “How does Brewery Square improve the urban area of Dorchester?”

Students completed a pedestrian count and a questionnaire

They will use this information next year in paper 3 of the geography GCSE where they will be examined being 30% of the paper.

### ► English

The end of the academic year is always a time for reflection, and,

in English, this is no different.

English is not an easy subject. It is full of complexities, cultural references and cross-curricular knowledge. Therefore, our ethos in English is based around ‘windows and mirrors’. This means that we intend to engage students in English texts that both mirror their own identity and culture but also introduces them to other ideas and themes that they may not yet have discovered.

We look back with pride at what our students have achieved this year:

They have discussed how our language has evolved from Ancient Greece, Anglo Saxons and Normans. They have read modern and classical texts like Private Peaceful, Frankenstein, Animal Farm, The Hunger Games, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Welcome to Nowhere.

They have created passionate, persuasive writing around climate change, global goals, feminism and representation of masculinity. They have studied Shakespeare’s tragedies, poetry from the likes of William Blake and Carol Ann Duffy and enjoyed the 20th Century play ‘Pygmalion’ with all of its ideas around the effect of our accent and dialect. They have looked at the representation of men



and women through Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Taylor Swift and Marilyn Monroe ...and this is only in KS3!

It is their hard work, coupled with the expertise we are lucky to have in our English department, which enables students at Dorset Studio School to be very well prepared not only for the challenges of their GCSEs but, more importantly, to have the cultural and academic knowledge English brings; to be good people who are able to communicate in the real world when they leave us.

### ► Science

This term year 7 have been studying both human and plant reproductive systems. Understanding this important aspect of life is important for both their own welfare and that of the crops that we depend on for our food. They have also been looking at our place in the wider universe, the evolution of the stars and the causes of the seasons that are so much part of life in this country. Using their scientific skills, they have been investigating the role of diffusion in a news story about some pranksters turning a swimming pool pink. Finally, they have been designing experiments to perfect a good cup of tea!

The Science Club has continued to excite its members with a range of things that go 'whoosh'! Lunchtimes have seen rockets being launched and volcanoes erupting. Making slime, fire writing and rainbow indicators have all been enjoyed by the students. Thanks go to Mrs Wilkinson and Mr Clulee for making this possible.

Year 8 have finished the term with a very successful trip to Monkey World. There they learnt about how the primates are cared for, this will link to the work next year in Animal Care. Linking to the topic they have been studying about adaptations and inheritance the students were able to see the evolutionary changes that have led to the variety of monkeys and apes in different parts of the world. Many of the students were surprised to learn that scientifically humans are defined as part of the family of great apes. Linking to their work in geography the students have also been looking at how the Earth and its atmosphere have evolved and the variety of different types of rocks that have formed.

Year 9 have now completed the first year of their GCSE course. The material studied so far is a significant part of their GCSE Paper 1 and very much forms the foundation of their studies in years 10 and 11. Work will be

set on Seneca for the summer holidays, whilst not compulsory this will certainly help prepare students for their future studies. Key topics for students to focus revision on include Biology (cells, transport in cells, food tests and enzymes, the heart and lungs, photosynthesis), Chemistry (atomic structure, the periodic table, ionic bonds, exothermic and endothermic reactions, testing for common gases), Physics (energy stores and transfers, scalar and vector quantities, waves and the electromagnetic spectrum, density, forces and speed, simple electrical circuits).

Many students in year 10 have demonstrated great maturity in their approach to the end of year assessments and this has been reflected in an excellent set of results across all three sciences. To support them in their future aspirations a range of resources will be provided for the summer holidays. The students have now covered most of Paper 1 and significant parts of Paper 2, the summer is a good time to review their learning and to make a list of the topics where they feel further support is required. Students will need to be ready to pick up the pace of their learning from the start of year 11 in order to be well prepared for their GCSE exams.

At Dorset Studio School we have



a longer than normal summer break, and students often start to forget what they have been taught. There is a lot of evidence that spending even a small amount of time during the summer, reviewing the previous year's work, will benefit those about to continue their studies in September.

A gentle reminder that for all science lessons students need a black pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and calculator. The calculator can be the same as the one required for maths. All science GCSE exams require the students to have a calculator and they need to learn to use this as part of their normal lessons.

► **The Arts - Illustration workshop**



Students were invited to a cartoon illustration workshop at Thomas Hardy's School on 5th July, A collaborative project involving other schools from the Wessex Partnership run by Jenny Stevens at THS, students were given the opportunity to



draw their own cartoons under the guidance of the exuberant James Parsons, a professional cartoonist (Crazy Comic Club) who encouraged the children to draw using a range of techniques in their own style. The final pieces will be displayed in Dorchester Library for the summer holiday.

► **The Arts - London Trip**



45 students went to London on July 4th to watch the musical 'Back To The Future' based on the 1980's film. Everyone had an experience on The London Eye first with an amazing view over London on an historic election day. Lunch was eaten in Jubilee Gardens with time for souvenir buying and then over the river Thames for more sightseeing and then on to The Adelphi Theatre for a packed matinee of the show. Students had a real treat watching its colourful, vibrancy, with many surprises throughout.

*'I've never been on the London Eye before, I was a bit nervous but it was amazing'*

*'The show was awesome, it had an amazing car in it!'*

*'I thought it was fun and exciting because it showed me the different sites and other places outside of Dorset'*

*'I liked seeing new sight and havening out with my friends outside of school – the experience was really fun'*

*'I really liked the London Eye and the theatre, it's amazing to see London. Thank you for this opportunity'*

► **The Arts - Samba workshop**

Students from year 7 and 8 joined in the fiesta and were treated to



a Samba drumming workshop as part of Big Rhythm Day from the wonderful Dorset Rural Music School. They were taught how to keep their drumming together with the use of poly rhythms, call and response and a variety of rhythms used by Brazilian drummers and especially during their carnival. The workshops were run by expert percussionist Felix Gibbons, who has spent a lot of time in Brazil and by Ellie Marsden who kindly organised the visit with Mrs Harris.



► Physical Education

A Year of Excellence in PE

We are thrilled to share the outstanding achievements and positive attitude of our students towards Physical Education this year. Their enthusiasm and commitment to PE have been truly impressive, reflecting the values of teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship that we aim to cultivate.

Key Stage 3 Highlights:

Our KS3 students have been remarkably active and engaged, covering a diverse range of 8 sports throughout the year. Their participation in each activity has been exceptional, showcasing their eagerness to learn new skills and embrace different challenges.

Key Stage 4 Highlights:

Our KS4 students have also shown a commendable spirit, participating in 6 different sports this year. Their dedication and hard work have not only improved their physical abilities but also fostered a sense of community and cooperation.



Additional Trips and Unique Opportunities:

This year, the PE department has organised a range of exciting trips that have provided our students with unique opportunities to explore new activities and environments:

Year 10 Sailing Adventure:  
Twelve Year 10 students had the

unique opportunity to sail on a yacht along the south coast of England. This adventure not only taught them sailing skills but also fostered teamwork and resilience as they navigated the open waters.



Year 9 Rowing Success: Six Year 9 students attended Weymouth Rowing Club, where they trained diligently and competed against other local schools. Their hard work paid off as they won the final race, bringing pride and joy to our school community.





Year 9 Progress Reward: Sixteen Year 9 students who had made the most progress from the first half of the year to the second half were rewarded by sailing upon Yacht Boleh in Portland Harbor. This was a fantastic opportunity for both students and staff.

#### Student Attitude and Participation:



What stands out the most this year is the students' exceptional attitude towards PE. Their willingness to participate, support each other, and strive for personal bests has created a vibrant and positive atmosphere in our PE sessions. Teachers have noted significant improvements in students' confidence, teamwork, and overall fitness levels.

#### Sporting Success Outside of School:

Our students have also been making waves outside of school with various sporting successes. Their commitment to staying

active and pursuing excellence in their chosen sports is truly commendable. We encourage everyone to stay active over the summer holidays and continue to build on their skills and fitness.

#### Tia Smith – Taekwondo success



Despite an unfortunate injury, Tia persevered and gave it everything she had and proudly came home with Gold & Silver medals for her Poomsae's at the British Spring Open Taekwondo Championships.

Tia's focus is now on rehab and preparation for taking her Black Belt exam in October, we wish Tia the very best with her recovery and training.

#### Looking Ahead:

As we reflect on this successful year, we are excited about the future of our PE program. We aim

to continue providing diverse and inclusive sports opportunities that cater to all interests and abilities. Our focus remains on fostering a love for physical activity and helping students develop lifelong healthy habits.

We welcomed Mr Brown into the PE department, he has been an excellent addition to the team; seeking opportunities to help students get active, especially in their lunch time.

We look forward to welcoming the students back in September after a very well earned rest.

Mrs Waring & Mr Brown

#### ► Celebrating excellent achievement and attitude to learning

In our last Celebratory Conference of the year, we recognised the consistent achievements of students. This year students achieved a record of over 40,000 Achievement Points with a success ratio of over 80%. This means that students are making consistently good choices and displaying behaviours that form great learning habits.

Over 170 students achieved our Platinum status which is our highest level of recognition and reward. Students have set the bar really high for the next academic year!



This year our 'Wall of Famers' are Jacob Wright and Rani Dhanji since they have the highest number of Achievement Points! Both students were recognised by the school community in the Conference. Kelsi Bolt also received a prize for her reading this year. Reading is a huge contributory factor to academic success and independence. We encourage you to keep your child reading over the summer!

### ► Mental Health in Schools Team update

Our safeguarding and pastoral staff have been working closely with the Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST) who have delivered bespoke courses of therapy for pupils across all the year groups, as well as providing workshops and courses for pupils, parents & carers throughout the year.

In the Autumn term they delivered a Friendship and Anxiety workshop to our year 7 classes and a presentation addressing Unhelpful Thinking Patterns to years 10 and 11.

After the Christmas break they worked with our year 11's on Managing Exam Stress leading up to their GCSE's, and Goals and Motivation for year 9.

This term they returned to provide workshops for Problem Solving for year 9 and Feeling Good for year 8.

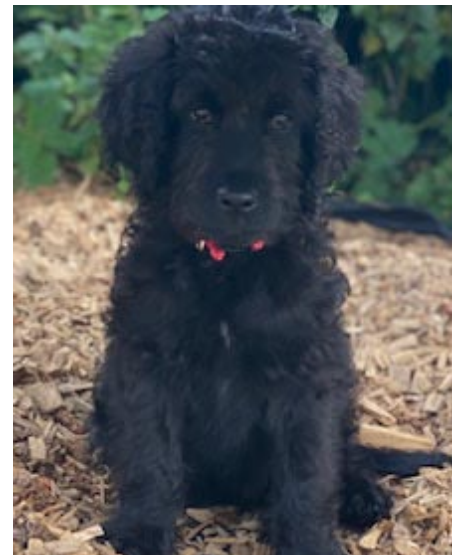
They also provided some very well received parent workshops for supporting your child with anxiety, which were held both face to face and online.

We will be continuing to collaborate with the Mental Health in Schools Team over the forthcoming year and look forward to sharing with you the calendar of events in the Autumn Term.

### ► Meet the Pastoral Team: Dottie

Dottie has just completed her third year here at Dorset Studio School and has been here since she was 12 weeks old.

She visits lots of different classrooms and this year has assisted in Animal Care lessons



on health checks and safe restraining of animals for certain treatments.

She has supported maths lessons, reading groups, emotionally supporting students, encouraged those who find it difficult to come to school, walk and talk sessions, assisted at forest school and finally she plays football at break and lunchtimes with the boys.





Quotes from some of our pupils

*"I absolutely love Dottie she gives great cuddles and welcomes us to school in the mornings at the gate"*

*"when I'm feeling sad she puts her head and her paw in my lap and lets me stroke her"*

*"The best is when she comes to PE and chases the balls"*

*"she brings joy to the class whenever she comes in, she quietly sits with who she likes and sleeps which keeps everyone quiet so as not to disturb her"*  
- Staff member

### ► Summer safeguarding and wellbeing

The summer holidays can be a time to relax, recharge and take a break.

However, adults can find it difficult to switch off during breaks from work, while young people may struggle with the loss of structure and not seeing their friends every day. It's important that you and your child look after your mental wellbeing during the break. The summer can also be a great time to develop good self-care habits, so that when term starts again, your child has the techniques they can turn to in stressful times.

**Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable summer break - we look forward to welcoming you back with us on Wednesday 4th September!**

The resources below contain activities and guidance to help support and boost mental wellbeing over the summer and beyond.

### Wellbeing activities: being kind to yourself - British Red Cross

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/wellbeing-activities-being-kind-to-yourself/>

A set of activities from the British Red Cross to help young people to be kind to themselves and look after their own wellbeing.

### Self-care resources - Anna Freud

<https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/self-care/>

A collection of strategies and activities for young people to support them to boost and look after their mental wellbeing.

### My self-care plan - Anna Freud

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/my-self-care-plan-secondary/?searchTerm=self+care>

A set of simple activities and a step-by-step guide to help young people create their own self-care plan

### ► Staying safe on holiday

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has some excellent advice and guidance regarding summer activities such as swimming, camping and outdoor cooking.

Water safety is a particularly important consideration at this time of year as many of us visit the beach, rivers or lakes.

Please take a moment to visit the RoSPA website and share the Water Safety Code information with your family:

<https://www.rospa.com/leisure-water-safety/water/advice/holiday>

### ► Term dates - Autumn 1 2024

#### Staff training

Monday 2nd September  
Tuesday 3rd September

#### First day for students - Autumn 1

Wednesday 4th September

#### Last day for students - Autumn 1

Wednesday 23rd October

#### Staff training

Thursday 24th October  
Friday 25th October

#### Half term

Monday 28th October to  
Friday 1st November