

DORSET STUDIO SCHOOL

JULY 2025

NEWS *letter*



Dorset
Studio School



Land & Environment is at the heart of everything we do



Message from the Principal

On behalf of the Governing Body and the entire staff team at school, may I take this opportunity to say 'thank you' for your support over the past year.

Your choice of selecting us to educate, nurture and support the development of your child/children puts us in a position of great trust. We intend to repay this with our relentless commitment to raising achievement and providing aspirational Post-16 pathways for your child.

Since January we have been working extremely hard to ensure that our school has an explicit focus on our specialism, Land and Environment studies. Put simply, we are a thriving LAND & ENVIRONMENT school and want to excel in this area. There is tremendous passion for our specialism and we want our pedigree to be highly regarded in local, regional and national contexts.

This is evident in the pillars of our new School Improvement Plan (see above right).

We decided on the imagery of pillars because each one is central to the delivery of our specialism, living within our culture and ethos. Similarly, the idea of each pillar contributing to our community as

"Land & Environment is at the heart of everything we do"



a whole appeals to us. I certainly would be interested in any constructive feedback on these as we move forwards.

In order to thrive, students must follow their timetable to ensure they are learning and continue to make progress day in, day out. Learning is demanding for all students, but represents everything we are about. It is designed to stretch or challenge thinking, provide your child with opportunities to apply newly acquired skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Learning is transformative and leads to the formation of better habits and further opportunities. Collectively, WE all contribute to writing the next chapter of our child's journey in adulthood.

Moving forwards, we would greatly appreciate it if you

follow our social media links. They provide a real insight into the 'A Day in the Life of a Dorset Studio School student.'

Our specialism from home, to school, to community really shines through. There are so many wonderful examples of personal achievement, the development of expert skills and a passion to compete.

Our Year 11 students have reached the end of their journey with us and look forward to collecting their results and new opportunities and adventures. Parent(s)/carer(s)/families and staff were incredibly proud of them as they assembled for the Prom at the Kingston Maurward House. We had arrivals in tractors, on horses, a horse and trap, huge agricultural machinery and a range of impressive vehicles!



(Photo credit - Mike Weeks,
dorsetphotoevent.co.uk)

I am certain that students will have made a lifetime memory at the event.

I will write to you again before the start of the new academic year with some keynote messages. The future is land & environment, the future is exciting, the place to be is Dorset Studio School!

Kind Regards
Jason Malone
Principal

Spotlight on Humanities

As another term draws to a close I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the successes of all students involved in Humanities lessons this year. It has been fabulous to see Dorset Studio School pupils engaged in a wide variety of activities and studying a range of history and geography related topics with such enthusiasm. In year 7 students have been developing their map reading skills which very much lays the foundation for GCSE Geography

at Key Stage 4. Students in Mrs. Le Mesurier's 7W group thoroughly enjoyed learning new skills which they will get to put to good use before the end of the academic year.





At Dorset Studio School we pride ourselves on creating fabulous learning activities outside of the classroom and there is nothing better than to witness our students inspired to learn about their natural environment in their Geography lessons.

Other Year 7 groups have also been developing their fieldwork related skills during the summer term, specifically with their river study. This provides students the opportunity to learn about the different characteristics of rivers and explore how they shape their environment. Fortunately for us, we have a river right on our doorstep.

Other year groups have also been out and about the Kingston Maurward campus. Mr. Toomey's Year 9 Geography group have been developing their fieldwork skills,

in particular learning how to draw effective field sketches. This is a pivotal skill which will prove invaluable in a year's time when they undertake their GCSE Geography physical fieldwork study at Lyme Regis. This is something that our current Year 10 have been working on this term, which culminated in their compulsory fieldwork visit last month. Their task was to evaluate the effectiveness of the multi-million pound hard and soft engineering strategies implemented to prevent erosion and protect the Lyme Regis from falling into the sea.

I would also like to congratulate Year 11 Humanities students who have worked diligently to prepare for their Summer exams. Whilst their BTEC Travel & Tourism course ended on 2nd May, they still had three

Geography GCSE papers to complete. All students are to be commended in their approach to preparing for these exams, using a host of different revision resources and techniques to further develop their skills and enhance their knowledge and understanding in readiness for their examinations. We definitely look forward to celebrating with them on results day 21st August.

Whilst our Year 11 students enjoy a well-earned break before embarking on the next stage of their educational journey, it is important to celebrate all year 10 students also. They have also recently completed their own summer series of mock exams.

In addition, we look forward to welcoming our new year 7s on 1st July to sample what the Dorset Studio School Humanities department has to offer. Whilst we also look forward to welcoming Year 9 students to our Poundbury site where they will begin to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and sample their new Key Stage 4 courses; GCSE Geography, GCSE History and BTEC Hospitality & Tourism.

Well done to everyone and thanks for another great year. Enjoy your summer safely.

Mr Dearden (Head of Humanities).



English

This half term we have celebrated many successes in English.

Year 11 students went into their final English exams (all four of them) with positive attitudes and exemplary conduct. The challenge of this very formal sequence of events was embraced wholeheartedly and many students came out of the experience feeling that they performed well. We are hoping for some excellent grades in the summer when these are released.

Year 10, likewise, experienced a full series of English Language and English Literature assessments (but in their case – mocks) and were commended by our team of invigilators for their immaculate behaviour and attitude through the realistically formal process. A substantial number of students surprised themselves with excellent marks, and the vast majority of our Year 10s said that they found the experience positive and helpful.

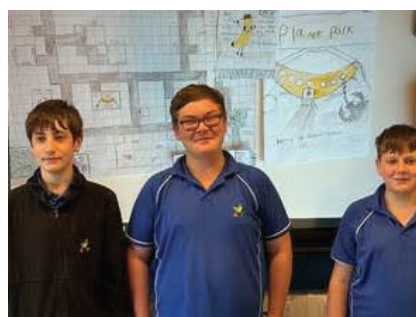
Year 10 also completed their Speaking and Listening assessments in the penultimate week of term. Taking-on subjects varying from bovine health to skateboarding, ancient history to Olivia Rodrigo, they produced formal presentations on a subject of their choice. This experience

helped increase confidence for public speaking in many students and also helped with their skills for non-fiction writing as they planned their presentations for their specific audience and anticipated questions they might face.

Maths - Project Based Learning

Year 8 have been creating a Lunar Theme Park during lessons this term; starting from scratch pupils drew out their rides, facilities and activities on a map but had to stick to a strict budget. Working in their teams, pupils calculated how much their theme parks would need to run on a daily basis and set an admission price to make sure they covered these costs. Once this was completed, pupils calculated their profits based on the number of visitors to the park.

The teams also had to create an advert which they presented to the class with the most successful given extra visitors to generate even more profit.



Science

As often happens at the end of the school year we say goodbye to some members of staff and welcome others in their place. Leaving the science department at the end of term are Mrs Phipps and Mr Horrobin. Between them they have had a significant impact on the science curriculum particularly in years 7, 8 and 9 at the Kingston Maurward site. They will both be missed. In their place we welcome Ms Steel to the team where she will also be taking on the role of developing a specific STEM curriculum for the new year seven classes. More news about this exciting development next term.

A new science curriculum for Key Stage 3 is being developed and this is very much focused on the school's Land and Environment specialism. During the last half term year seven and eight have been experiencing the first modules from this new course. One theme that they have been looking at is the marine environment. This has included, investigating the plants and animal that live on the sea shore, learning about the chemistry of sea water, dissecting a fish, the science of waves and the energy they transfer and the pressure at the bottom of the sea. A second theme has been that of a 'Healthy Farmer'. This



has included balanced diets and how to maintain good mental health and physical health. Understanding the science of our local environment and the ability to lead a healthy, happy and productive life within it are at the core of this new Year 7 and 8 course.

Year 8 have also been on a trip to Monkey World where they had a talk about caring for the primates. Seeing the different primates, watching their activities and the different ways in which their needs are being met helped to make sense of the series of lessons that the students have had this year. The final lessons in the Monkey World topic have looked at the different diets (folivores, insectivores, gummivores etc) and the wide range of social groupings used by primates.

Year 9 have now completed over a third of their science GCSE. For some the end of year 9 exams were a reason to celebrate all that they have learnt this year and the significant progress that they have made. Hopefully they will all be looking after their notes to help with the revision that they will need to do in two year's time. Final topics covered this term have been ecology (bio-diversity, biotic and abiotic factors, the carbon cycle and the effect of human interactions on

ecosystems), the chemistry of the atmosphere (how the atmosphere evolved, greenhouse gases and climate change, atmospheric pollution) and domestic electricity (wiring plugs, fuses, earth wires, the difference between AC and DC). This mixture of the three different sciences will continue through years 10 and 11. Year 10 have now completed three quarters of their science GCSE. The year 10 mock exams were based on the real 2024 exam papers and there were lots of reasons to celebrate the progress that the students are making. The final topics this year have included respiration (both aerobic and anaerobic as used in bio-digesters), variation and evolution (including selective breeding, genetic engineering and GM crops), energy changes in chemical reactions (exothermic and endothermic) and water (both how we produce potable water that is safe to drink and how waste water is treated). This final topic of water builds on the trip to the Wessex Water treatment plant that year ten went on in November of last year. In September the students will be completing the final topics from the first of the biology, chemistry and physics papers. The November mock exams will be based on the paper one topics and these

would be a good starting point for students looking for some holiday work!

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/science-8464/specification/specification-at-a-glance>

Starting in September there will be lunchtime support students specifically for the students in year 11. For some students there will be a requirement to attend but all are welcome. Initially the sessions will be targeted at those aiming to achieve grades 4 and 5 in their GCSEs.

It was pleasing to see the year 11 students coming out of each of the six GCSE science exams this summer feeling confident that they had prepared well and that they had been able to demonstrate their mastery of the subject. We hope that the results this summer reward them for their hard work and wish them success in the various next steps that each has chosen.

Martin Hampshire
Head of science.

The Arts

We have had some amazing work going on in the Art room this term. Year 7s have been exploring connections between music and art, including some



abstract oil pastel designs based on the work of Kandinsky, drawing to music and creating illustrated black-out song lyrics based on "Hotel California" by The Eagles and "Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong.

Year 8s have been learning about different ways of presenting places including some neat architectural drawings of urban landscapes as well as cubist watercolours of our beautiful Kingston Maurward House.

Year 9s got to draw "en plein air" at the house and took on the challenge of drawing the reflections on the lake, having studied Georges Seurat's "Bathers" and trying out a little Pointillism!

We also had a brilliant Art trip to the Thomas Hardy School for the annual Wessex MAT collaborative illustration event, presented by the talented illustrator Jenna Herman who travelled from Frome. Students worked with students from different schools and ages, across the MAT, to produce an illustrated book cover based on a given animal. All students involved did really well and were excellent ambassadors for the Dorset Studio School.

Forest School

It's been a humbling time in the woods this summer as the Forest School team have enjoyed heartfelt pride at the sheer progress, kindness and confidence grown by the children in their time together.

Over the year we have observed how challenges have been surpassed, contributions blossom and friendships branch out. An example of that is 'Chewan with Ewan & Troy Café'. A shared love of campfire cooking helped cement this friendship in a creative craft café.





Structure, flooring, serving suggestions and menus were all designed and delivered beautifully in a brilliant example of the value of Forest School being in the journey of creating, not just the outcome.

Culture Corner

7W were invited to share in Mr Osborn's food culture by enjoying some Jersey New Potatoes.



Cooked to a traditional Jersey recipe, the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the potatoes with many requesting that we share the recipe with you:

Ingredients:

Jersey New Potatoes, Fresh Mint, Pinch of salt, Butter

Method:

- Place the potatoes along with the fresh mint and salt into a pan of boiling water (You could boil the potatoes in sea water)
- Leave to simmer for 20 minutes and check that the potatoes are cooked through with a knife
- Drain (Keep the mint)
- Add LOTS of butter & ENJOY!



Extra Curricular Achievements - Boleh sailing trip

5 of our Year 9 students visited the impressive Olympic sailing academy in Portland. With expert guides from the Boleh Trust they "started their journey in sailing" and gained a level 1 YHA certificate. They had 2 full days sailing learning boating vocabulary, tying basic knots, helping rig the boat and demonstrating their skills securing the boat at the end. The skipper commented that the students were brilliant (they were).

As the boat left harbour, accompanying teacher Mr. O'Brien was heard to say "never work with children or animals" as his ears were bleeding after the girls butchered the theme of the Titanic...





Extra Curricular Achievements - National Schools Equestrian Association

The school has been represented by a small core group of students at the National Schools Equestrian Association events this year. With Poppy E (year 8) being the most active, having competed in On-line, Individual and Team events at Dressage. Other riders have included Beau W (year 9), Taylor R (year 10) and Mia H (year 10). Mia did particularly well in winning her dressage class and qualifying for the national finals at Addington. These students have all been riding their own ponies and horses at the various events and we rely on the support of their parents to bring them to the events.

The team is already set to expand in September with additional students interested in joining. The first event being show

jumping at Moreton Equestrian on the 20th September acting as a qualifier for the national finals at Addington in October. If you have any questions about the Dorset Studio School NSEA team please contact Mr Hampshire at martin.hampshire@dorsetstudioschool.co.uk



Extra Curricular Achievements - Volleyball success

Callum S in Year 10 has been dedicating a huge amount of time and effort outside of school to training and competing in his chosen sport of Volleyball. He plays for his local Dorset team Wessex of which he is captain of the U15's U16's Local League & Adults team! To be able to develop, improve and play at his best, Callum travels to Exeter once a month to train with the South West of England team, trains in Dorset 3 times a week with Wessex, as well as being in the gym twice a week.

This year Callum was made captain of the South West of England team at the Inter Regional Championships in Kettering and they came home with Bronze,





making them 3rd in Great Britain.

Callum also plays Beach Volleyball and has already won one round of the U16 National series this year alongside his partner Felix. Looking forwards, Callum is on the England pathway radar for selection to represent England across the world in the U17's and will be trying out for the UK Beach Volleyball adult squad, which would enable him to compete across Europe this summer.

We wish Callum all the very best as he engages with these opportunities, and hope to see him competing for his country in the near future!

Year 10 Summer Work Placements

Our Year 10 pupils have all been busy this term preparing for their end of year work placements, which began on 7th July.

Clockwise from top left:
Jack F at Winscombe Shoot, Beaminster - rearing game birds.

Amber W has worked at the National Trust in south Somerset, using her horticultural skills at Barrington Court and Lytes Cary. She has also worked a day with the NT rangers, making hay on conservation meadows.

George H at GCS Agricultural Engineers and machinery



dealership. He has been involved in assisting the technical team as well as completing his own projects of replacing worn out cab bolts.

Luca M at Rampisham Farm Estate (2,500acres) - gaining a valuable insight into extensive conservation livestock grazing systems to working in the farm workshop, maintaining farm equipment. Pictured with farm manager, Gareth Beynon Farm, receiving positive feedback.

World of work day

Part of the preparation for their work placements has involved writing and presenting their CVs and completing a formal

interview, which has been made possible through the kind support of members of the Rotary Club.

The day was a resounding success, with feedback from the interview panel praising the pupils' professionalism and interview skills.

This initiative goes from strength to strength each year and we would like to extend our thanks to the volunteers who make this valuable opportunity possible.





Summer in Dorset

Summer Holiday Opportunities - Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme

Dorset Council have funding from the Department for Education's (DfE) holiday activities and food programme again this year. This funding means Dorset Council can offer fun activities and tasty food free of charge to children who are:

- in receipt of benefit-related free school meals
- and attending school in the Dorset Council area

Dorset Council also have discretionary codes available to children who are:

- in the care of the local authority
- participating in a resettlement program
- referred by a school, family, or social worker

Once you sign up they will send you your holiday pass code by text or email. Keep your code somewhere safe as you'll need it to book free

places on holiday activities throughout the year.

If you don't know your child's passcode, or you wish to apply for a pass code, you can email holidayactivities@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk with your child's:

- name
 - date of birth
 - school
- and they will reply to you within 3 working days.

Passcodes are issued when Free School Meal applications are approved. Many of the activities that accept the pass code will also be open to fee-paying customers too.

If your child is not eligible for free school meals, many activities that accept the pass code will also be open to fee-paying customers too. You can search for activities in your area on our Family Information Directory at <https://familyinformationdirectory.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/kb5/dorset/fsd/results>.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Summer can be a welcome chance to rest and reset. For many, it's an opportunity to slow down, reconnect with ourselves and the things we enjoy. But the holidays don't feel relaxing for everyone. For young people, the change in routine, time away from friends and uncertainty about what's next can be unsettling.

That's why looking after mental health over the summer matters. The break offers space to pause and recharge, but also to build habits that support wellbeing in the long term.

The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families has published a self-care toolkit that contains advice on a wide range of strategies, techniques and activities that can help children and young people maintain positive mental health and wellbeing over the summer break. <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/self-care/>

An accompanying booklet to create and record a personalised self-care plan can be found at <https://d1uw1dikibnh8j.cloudfront.net/media/15030/my-self-care-plan-secondary.pdf>

If you have a concern about your child's mental health over the summer, a full list of organisations that can provide support and advice



24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week can be found at <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/young-people-urgent-help/>

As with any safeguarding concern, if you consider there is an immediate risk of serious harm to yourself or anyone else, please call 999.

Online safety during the summer holidays

With the summer holidays fast approaching children and young people will have more free time to spend with friends, family and online.

For some, this will be spent using the internet to keep in touch with friends, catch up with the latest apps and online trends, and playing their favourite games.

Sit down together

For parents, the summer holidays are a great chance to sit down with your children. Together you can visit their favourite sites and play their favourite games, this is a great way to stay up to date with online lives and show them that you're interested in what they are doing. The holidays are also a good opportunity to have positive conversations about the internet, so if something ever does upset your child online they would feel more confident in confiding in you. These [conversation starters](#) are a great

tool to help encourage an open dialogue with your child.

Social media and staying in touch

During the summer holidays, young people may want to keep in touch with their friends through social networking sites or games. It's a good time to ask them about what sites they use, and check any age requirements as many social media sites require users to be at least 13 years old.

Encourage your children to use the privacy tools on the services they use, so that the content they post is only available to people they know and trust in real life. To help your children set these up, we have [a guide to the privacy settings on the different sites](#). You can also download the UK Safer Internet Centre's [safety checklists for popular sites](#) such as Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook.

Talking about their time online

The holidays are also a good opportunity to talk to your children about their online friendships, the sites they use and encourage best practices online. Why not take the ['Be the change' quiz](#) and help 8 – 13 year olds to explore how children and young people share images and videos online.

Sharing holiday pictures

Some children may want to share photos and videos of what they are getting up to in their summer holidays online. Talk to your children about what types of photos are appropriate to share, and who they are okay to share with. Photos can hold clues that give away personal information. For example, if you share a selfie of you and friends, are there any landmarks or street signs that give away your location? This is true for photos you might share of your children too! It's always worth asking children if they are happy with an image you want to share online. [Safer Internet Day research](#) found that 2 in 5 (40%) of 8-17s said that in the last year their parents or carers have posted a photo of them that embarrassed them, rising from 34% of 8-12s to 46% of 13-17s.

Make a family agreement

A [family agreement](#) is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet and discuss together how to behave in a positive way when online at home, at school or at a friend's house.

The agreement involves generating promises, these are positive statements about how your family want to look after each other online and how you should treat others online. The summer can be one of the best times to sit down as a family and agree these promises together.

Most importantly: enjoy the summer holidays!



Dorset Studio School will be at

DORSET CULTIVATION EVENT



WED 24 SEPT 2025

Key dates for Autumn Term 2025

Monday 1st September -
Staff INSET day

Tuesday 2nd September -
Staff INSET day

Wednesday 3rd September -
Start of term for Year 7,
Year 10 & Year 11 only

Thursday 4th September -
Start of term for Years 8 & 9.
All pupils in school.

Friday 5th September -
Year 11 Work Placements begin

Thursday 18th September -
KS4 Curriculum Information Evening
Poundbury Campus

Saturday 27th September -
Open Event for prospective pupils

Thursday 2nd October -
KS3 Curriculum Information Evening
Kingston Maurward Campus

Thursday 9th October -
Year 11 Revision Skills Day
Kingston Maurward House

Thursday 16th October -
Year 7 Photographs

Thursday 23rd October -
Staff INSET day

Friday 24th October -
Staff INSET day