

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

It has been another busy week at St Dunstan's School and the next few weeks are equally looking very full. This week's newsletter will provide families with an update on everything they need to know.

We have welcomed the children's author Fleur Hitchcock, who spoke to students in Year 7 this week. Fleur was incredibly enthusiastic and passionate about her work. Perhaps as a consequence of the talk, one or several of our students will be able to follow in her footsteps.

It was great to see the number of students from all year groups who attended and participated in our Quest club. Enrichment is such an essential part of a student's school experience and I encourage all year groups to get involved in the opportunities provided by the school and staff.

I am also very proud to announce the positive engagement in our new rewards system. Since September there have been 22,614 positive points awarded to students in all year groups. These have been given to recognise when students have demonstrated that they are 'On Track'. Put more simply, every student has received on average 45 positive points in 25 school days. Well done to all the students for your hard work so far this term. We will be sharing plans shortly for our celebration assemblies in the final week of the half term, where the school will look to recognise students for their achievements this term.



04.10.24

NEXT WEEK  
ASSEMBLY  
FOCUS:

**Addictive  
Substances**

**Key Dates**

Year 11  
Information  
Evening  
10/10/24

Inset days:

Friday 25th  
October **and**  
Wednesday  
27th  
November

[Click here for  
Extra-Curricular  
Activities](#)

[Click here for  
term dates](#)



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Following on from messages on social media and correspondence sent out, I would like to thank all parents/guardians for their considerate parking outside the school at the end of the day. Unfortunately, the parking issue continues to persist, especially in Cox's Close. This is an understandable cause for concern for residents. Please can I ask all parents/carers who to be considerate of our neighbours and find suitable locations to park on the main road or in the school car park. I know that it is incredibly busy and space can be limited and I thank everyone for their patience and consideration.

Thank you again for your continued support. Have a great weekend.

Many thanks

Mr P Balkwill



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**Year 11 Prom...save the date!**

**Stay tuned for more information coming soon...**



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## Pupil Premium and Free School Meals

Dear Parent/Carer

We are all too aware of how the recent cost-of-living increases may affect our local community, and we want to encourage you to access appropriate mechanisms of support. The Pupil Premium and Free School Meals funding allows schools to creatively support students. This funding is confidential and used to support your child.

If your child is eligible for 'free school meals' and you register them for this, we will receive extra funding called 'pupil premium'. We use this extra money to improve the educational provision and resources at the school.

### What is Pupil Premium funding?

Pupil premium funding from the government is given to schools to help pupils reach their full potential, regardless of their background or financial situation. It's provided for pupils who:

- Are registered for free school meals
- Have been registered for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years
- Are, or have been, in care
- Have parents in the armed forces

### How is the Pupil Premium funding spent?

Schools have the freedom to spend the Premium in a way they think is best to support the raising of attainment. Funding is given to schools and is spent according to a budgeted plan across three areas. These include:

1. High-quality teaching, such as staff professional development.
2. Targeted academic support, such as tutoring.
3. Wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to success in schools, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support.

Parents do not receive this money from schools and there is not a budget to spend per student. Schools are expected to formulate a plan to use the overall funding, this must be based on evidence based research and approved by the Governing body.

### How do I register?

To register, please visit the following web page.

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/free-school-meals/>

Similarly please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions or would like to update us about your child and their eligibility for funding.



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# Year 11 Information Evening

We are delighted to invite parents/carers and Year 11s to our Year 11 Information Evening. The event will be held at St Dunstan's on **Thursday 10th October** at **18.00 - 19.30**.

The purpose of the event is to provide you and your child with information on how they can be successful in their final GCSE year. There will be talks on how to revise effectively; tips on revision from each of the core subjects; how to manage stress in the run up to the exam period and advice on how parents can support their children. During the evening students and parents will also have the opportunity to speak to teachers about their GCSE subjects. Refreshments will also be available in the canteen.

In previous years, parents and students who have attended the information evening have given very positive feedback on its impact and the messages given. We strongly encourage all parents/carers and Year 11 students to join us during the evening, so that we can work together to ensure that you are successful in Year 11. Please use the Google form below to let us know whether or not you'll be attending. Thank you.

[Sign Up for Info Evening](#)



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## Year 7 meet author Fleur Hitchcock!

This week, thanks to Bath Festivals, the fantastic children's author, Fleur Hitchcock came to meet all of our Year 7s for a crash course in writing. Fleur talked about her inspiration, the background of some of her mysteries and some historical fun fact-checking.

Fleur's talk was really engaging and she signed copies of her new book for some of the students afterwards.

It was a brilliant morning full of inspiration and enthusiasm, and we're very grateful that Fleur took the time out of her busy schedule to come and meet us all, and thanks to Bath Festivals for funding it!



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# National Poetry Day

What fun we have had this week, acknowledging the power and comfort of poetry in our daily lives!

Thursday started with a hunt for tiny, blazer pocket sized poems, designed to uplift and allow the chance to ponder. These were hidden all around the site for lucky 'finders'.

Staff shared their favourite poems with students throughout the day and explored why they liked them.

Students wrote poetry in several curriculum areas, ranging from updated versions of Jenny Joseph's 'Warning' to poetry about counting (this year's theme) and things that generally make them smile.

Poetry has few rules and it was fun to be creative and to play with metrical rhythms and figurative language that we usually analyse in accomplished writers. We're already looking forward to next year!



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Protect me. There is no Planet B.



I am the Sun, eating away the hours,  
I am the gloves, getting nourished by the rain,  
I am the desert, of never ending sand,  
I am the mountains, towering over the land,  
I am the wind, dancing, here I stand.

I am a home, peaceful and still  
I am a bench, sitting on a hill.

I wonder if I will ever ~~be~~ live,  
 I have the car but I am not using it,  
 I ~~use~~ the ~~public~~ ~~transport~~ ~~system~~,  
 I want to use transport  
 instead of cars.

I potent I ~~earn~~ see play with  
I fear humans fight,  
I touch the sky when humans  
give meanings,  
I worry the humans christos,  
the path

→ cry humans exploiting the earth  
→ various ~~species~~ <sup>there are</sup> ~~human~~ <sup>extinct</sup> ~~extinction~~ <sup>among</sup>

I like to start the day off  
with a nice plate of food,  
or something steaming and hot in  
a bowl.

There are so many options.  
I'm spoiled for choice,  
and none of those options get old.

There are pancakes and muffins,  
and hot buttered toast.  
Cereals and mueslis galore.  
I can pile them all up,  
and pile them all in.  
Then, there's seconds if I really  
want more.

Now, I know some like dinners  
as their favorite meal.  
For others, it's lunches or brunch.  
But for me, I've discovered  
that eating a brunch  
is just a little too like eating lunch.

So, I'm up bright and early,  
to start the day right.  
Just come to the kitchen and see.  
You can keep all your dinners,  
your suppers and lunch.  
Breakfast's the main meal for me.



## DO THE TASK

'Leisure' - W.H.Davies (1911)

This is my favourite poem.  
What do you think the message is?

WHAT is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare?—  
No time to stand beneath the boughs,  
And stare as long as sheep and cows;  
No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass;  
No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night;  
No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance;  
No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began?  
A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare

## The Geography Teacher

Our teacher told us one day he would leave  
And sail across a warm blue sea  
To places he had only known from maps,  
And all his life had longed to be.  
The house he lived in was narrow and grey  
But in his mind's eye he could see  
Sweet-scented jasmine clinging to the walls,  
And green leaves burning on an orange tree.  
He spoke of the lands he longed to visit,  
Where he was never cold or sad.

Then halfway through his final term  
He took ill and never returned,  
And he never got to that place on the map  
Where the green leaves of the orange tree  
The mugs were redolent on the classroom  
His name was forgotten, it faded away  
But a lesson he never knew he taught  
Is with me to this day.

I travel to where the green leaves burn  
To where the ocean's glass-clear and  
To all those places my teacher taught  
But which he never knew.

ONE-ONE WAS  
A RACE HORSE  
TWO-TWO  
WAS ONE TOO  
ONE-ONE WON  
ONE RACE  
TWO-TWO  
WON ONE  
TOO



## KINDNESS

## Quest Club

This week saw the first session of Quest Club, a new Dungeons and Dragons club full of intrepid adventurers ready to battle dragons and conquer dungeons.

Lots of excited and very enthusiastic students attended, ready to embark on their own quests. Dungeons and Dragons is great for improving confidence, communication, leadership, teamwork, imagination and empathy ...not to mention storytelling!

Watch this space and we'll keep you up to date on our adventures...



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# Become a School Governor



Are you passionate about education? Do you want to help shape the future of young minds?

Becoming a school governor is an incredible opportunity to use your skills, time, and passion to ensure students receive the best education and support. Whether you're a parent, professional, or community member, your voice can make a real impact in the direction and success of our schools.

## Make a Lasting Impact in Five Key Ways:

- Attend termly Governing Body meetings, reviewing data and ensuring the best outcomes for students.
- Get tailored, ongoing training to build your skills and understand your role (induction, safeguarding, and more).
- Act as a link governor, focusing on an area of your interest or expertise, and reporting on school progress.
- Represent the school positively in the community – become a proud ambassador!
- Take part in important panels (interviews, exclusions, and more), shaping the school's future.

## Who Can Be a School Governor?

No prior experience is needed! All that's required is a commitment to the role and a willingness to learn. We need governors from all walks of life:

- Parent Governors: Provide insights from the parent community.
- Community Governors: Bring your skills and experience, even without a direct connection to the school.
- Foundation Governors: Preserve the school's religious character.
- Staff Governors: Offer the unique perspective of school staff.

## What Do You Get Out of It?

Being a school governor is incredibly rewarding! You'll develop valuable skills, make a positive impact in your community, and help prepare students for success in further education and beyond. It's a role that's challenging but never dull, giving you the chance to contribute to something truly meaningful.



For more information, contact Emily Walker (Governance Professional): [ewalker@msnpartnership.com](mailto:ewalker@msnpartnership.com)  
Find a list of local governing bodies on the MNSP website.

If you are interested in becoming a Governor at St Dunstan's School, please contact [secretary@stdunstansschool.com](mailto:secretary@stdunstansschool.com)



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## Bridgwater and Taunton Open Evening

# OPEN EVENTS

[www.btc.ac.uk](http://www.btc.ac.uk)

### BRIDGWATER CAMPUS

Tuesday 8 October | 6pm - 8pm

### TAUNTON CAMPUS

Wednesday 9 October | 6pm - 8pm

REGISTER  
NOW!

BRINGING OUT YOUR BEST



BRIDGWATER  
& TAUNTON  
COLLEGE

## Some other links

[What's On at Millfield](#)

[Millfield Scholarships](#)



MILLFIELD



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# Yeovil College Open Evening



## STEP INTO YEOVIL COLLEGE

**OPEN** **23 OCT**  
**EVENT** **5PM-8PM**



**REGISTER TO ATTEND**



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# Strode College Open Evening



You are warmly invited to our

## Open Evening

Thursday 24 October  
5.30pm-8pm



- >> Come and meet our friendly and welcoming students and staff.
- >> Find out what courses, apprenticeships, enrichments and facilities we have on offer.



Register to attend our Open Evening by scanning this QR code.

Register online today!



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<b><u>O</u>rganised &amp; Proactive</b>	<p>Bringing the correct equipment, kit and uniform</p> <p>Meeting deadlines</p> <p>Working on tasks independently and completing homework to a high standard</p>
<b><u>N</u>eat &amp; Tidy work</b>	<p>Smart, well presented books demonstrating your best work</p>
<b><u>T</u>enacity</b>	<p>Trying your hardest, rising to challenges, having a 'can do' attitude, working out solutions and taking ownership of your learning</p>
<b><u>R</u>eady, Respectful and Responsible</b>	<p>Being a role model by consistently demonstrating our basic expectations</p>
<b><u>A</u>nswering, reading and listening like an expert</b>	<p>Sophisticated full sentence answers using technical terms</p> <p>Following along, tracking the text and ready to read aloud in class.</p> <p>Reading widely and for pleasure</p> <p>Listening and considering the views of others</p> <p>Taking in turns to respond</p>
<b><u>C</u>ontributing to the class</b>	<p>Playing an active role in every lesson</p> <p>Attention to the speaker, sat up straight, arms still, pens down</p> <p>Teacher focused</p>
<b><u>K</u>indness &amp; Community minded</b>	<p>Caring, polite, looking after one another and the site</p> <p>Speaking with kindness and respect</p> <p>Supporting staff and other students to create a positive learning environment for all</p>



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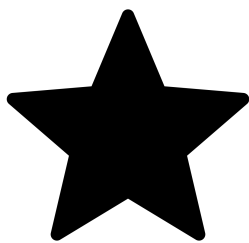


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# ATTENDANCE MATTERS



**100%**

Attendance

Be in to win - 100% attendance will be rewarded with TRACK Stars and chance to win Amazon vouchers

82% of students achieve 5 GCSEs grade 5+

**95%+**

Attendance

77% of students achieve 5 GCSEs grade 5+

**92-93%**

Attendance

53% of students achieve 5 GCSEs grade 5+

Below

**90%**

Attendance

43% of students achieve 5 GCSEs grade 5+

**96%**

Attendance

This is the target equalling at most 8 days off per year

Absences  
**add up**

Missing 2 days per month means you miss 10% of school

