



## Weekly Newsletter 2025-6

Dear Families and Parents,

Welcome to this week's newsletter. Each week, we'll be sharing updates to celebrate what makes our school so special.

This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about everything you need to know to support your child, from important events and dates to new initiatives. I encourage you to take a moment each week to read it so you can stay up to date.

We look forward to sharing all the great news with you this academic year. If you have any good news stories or student achievements you'd like to share, please feel free to reach out to us!

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

P Balkwill

Headteacher





## Key Information

### Key Dates

Wednesday 24th September- Open Morning 9-11am

Thursday 25th September- Open Morning 9-11am & Evening 6-8pm

Friday 26th September- Year 11 Thorpe Park Trip

Friday 3rd September- Year 10 Thorpe Park Trip

Thursday 9th October- Key Stage Career's Fair

### Important Information

#### Student Pick-up and Drop-off

As many of you are aware, we are experiencing high levels of traffic at the start and the end of each day. In order to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and parents during these times, we would like to remind all families of the following-

- **Drive slowly:** Please stick to the **5 mph speed limit**
- **Use the right area:** The turning circle at the front of the school is for buses and taxis only. If you need to drop off or pick up your child on school grounds, please use the **top car park**.
- **Parking off-site:** If possible, please consider arranging pick-up and drop-off on Wells Road or other nearby streets. When you do this, please be considerate of our neighbors and avoid blocking driveways or parking illegally.
- **Yellow markings:** The yellow safety markings outside the school on Wells Road must be kept clear at all times to allow for safe entry and exit. Please do not park there.

Moving forwards we will continue to review the arrangements for parking and collection in order to support everyone to access and leave the site safely. In the meantime, we thank everyone in advance for their consideration and cooperation.

## Weekly Attendance Update

### Attendance Update

Year 7	97.3%
Year 8	93.4%
Year 9	90%
Year 10	91.1%
Year 11	90.2%
Whole School	93%

### Every Session Counts!

**Our minimum attendance target is 96%.** Over the course of the year it is easy to accumulate absences that could result in your child falling below this threshold. To help everyone to understand the impact of absence we will now talk about the number of sessions and days absence.

Band	Percentage	Registers & Days Absent	Classification	Impact
1	100%	0	Perfect	No absence
2	98% to <100%	8 / 4	Excellent	Minimal absence
3	96% to <98%	15 / 8	Good	A few justified absences
4	93% to <96%	27 / 14	Requires Improvement	Occasional absence Significant attainment risks
5	90% to <93%	38 / 19	Concerning	At risk of persistent absence Severely affecting outcomes
6	Below 90%		Persistent absence	Requires urgent intervention
7	Below 50%		Severe Absence	Requires extreme intervention

## Weekly Attendance Update

### Every Session Counts!

### How can I support my child's attendance?

- Arrange medical appointments for after school.
- Come back to school after appointments.
- Go to school before appointments to get you present mark.
- Arrange for trips/breaks away to take place late on Friday afternoon and return Sunday evening.
- A slight cough or cold is not a reason for absence. Often students are well enough to attend with a seasonal cold.
- Use the NHS guidance [is my child too ill for school?](https://www.nhs.uk) - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)). This will provide you with guidance to make an informed decision being keeping your child home.
- Keep up to date with what is happening in school so that your child does not miss out on any important upcoming dates.
- Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular opportunities.
- Create a consistent morning and bedtime routine. Getting enough sleep is essential for your child to be ready and motivated.
- Talk positively about school. Negative comments can influence how your child feels about attending school.
- Recognise and praise your child for effort and attendance

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## On Track Update

<b><u>O</u>rganised</b>	Equipped, on time, and completing homework
<b><u>N</u>eat</b>	Smart, well presented books demonstrating your best work.
<b><u>T</u>ry hard</b>	Trying your hardest and rising to the challenge.
<b><u>R</u>esponsible</b>	A role model to others in your appearance, actions and words
<b><u>A</u>ctive</b>	Listening, responding, and participating in lessons
<b><u>C</u>ommunity</b>	Supporting staff and other students to create a positive learning environment for all.
<b><u>K</u>nowledgeable</b>	Knowing key information, concepts and terminology for each subject/unit

## Our 'On Track' Total so far.....

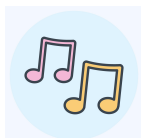
# 13,185

## Well done to all of our students!





## Instrument Lessons



We are so lucky at St Dunstan's to have many experienced instrument teachers who come in each week to teach our students.

Learning an instrument has many benefits for students, including improved memory, increased confidence, reduced stress, promoting creativity and enjoyment.

If you would like to learn an instrument, we have teachers available to teach the following instruments **Guitar, Bass, Ukulele, Drums, Singing, Piano, Violin, Music Production**. Please speak to Mrs Hopton in the music department if you are interested in lessons.



### Instrument Lessons



Would you like to learn an instrument?

We have specialist teachers for lessons on guitar, bass, ukulele, singing, piano, violin, drums, harp and production music.

If you would like to have lessons, please speak to Mrs Hopton in the music department.  
[nhopton@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk](mailto:nhopton@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk)



### Instrument Lessons

Guitar, Bass, Ukulele	£11 for 20 mins, £16.50 for 30 mins
Drums	£14 for 20 mins, £21 for 30 mins
Singing	£12 for 20 mins, £17.50 for 30 mins
Piano, Violin	£10 for 20 mins, £15 for 30 mins
Production Music	£16 for 30 min lesson



# Somerset Carnival 2025



We are very proud of our outstanding students who play such an important role in the annual Somerset Carnival. From the talented performers who light up the stage to the dedicated charity collectors who give their time to support important causes, these students embody the true spirit of community. The road crew works tirelessly behind the scenes and every show night to ensure everything runs smoothly, while others shine as all-round superstars, contributing their energy and enthusiasm in countless ways.

Their hard work, commitment, and passion help make the Carnival a truly special event for everyone involved. Through their involvement, they showcase our school's TRACK values: **Truth, Resilience, Ambition, Community, and Kindness**. Whether it's supporting the causes they believe in, facing challenges with determination, or working together to make the Carnival a success, these students truly exemplify the very best of our community. We celebrate and thank each and every one of them for their invaluable contribution to this wonderful tradition!

The 2025 Somerset Carnivals will kick off with **Bridgwater Carnival** on **Saturday, November 1st**, followed by other Guy Fawkes Carnivals in towns like **Burnham-on-Sea, Glastonbury, North Petherton, Shepton Mallet, Wells, and Weston-super-Mare** throughout November. Keep an eye out for our students at one of your local events—and don't forget to give them an extra big cheer!



**Truth**

**Resilience**

**Ambition**

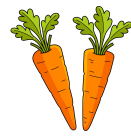
**Community**

**Kindness**





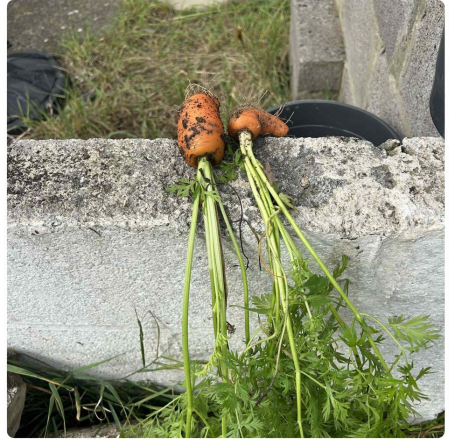
## Gardening Updates



We are very pleased with the progress of our school garden!

Lots of vegetables are growing beautifully, and some of our students have even taken home fresh produce to share with their families.

A big thank you to everyone involved — your hard work is paying off!



Truth

Resilience

Ambition

Community

Kindness





# DofE Volunteering



A huge WELL DONE to all of our amazing DofE students who have been volunteering this year! Your dedication, enthusiasm and willingness to give up your time have truly made a difference in our community.

You should all be incredibly proud of what you've achieved!

Details on how to enrol onto this year's Bronze and Silver programmes will be sent out soon.



**YOUTH  
WITHOUT  
LIMITS**

# Thank you

to

**The Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants**

from

**St Dunstan's School**

who spent

**1066 Hours**

**volunteering between**

**1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.**

We are immensely proud of the dedication, effort and achievement of young people making an impact in their community.

The social value of these hours is

**£6822**

Ruth Marvel OBE, Chief Executive

**June 2025**

**Truth**

**Resilience**

**Ambition**

**Community**

**Kindness**



## Silver DofE Awards



Congratulations to our first-ever Silver DofE Award achievers!

A massive well done to Poppy, Nic and St – all from last year's Year 11 – for completing their Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award!

We're so proud of your hard work, commitment and amazing achievement.

Your certificates will be sent to you soon.

Well done from all of us!

Details on how to enrol onto this year's Bronze and Silver DofE programmes will be sent out soon.



Truth

Resilience

Ambition

Community

Kindness



## Thorpe Park Reward Trip



We are SO excited to announce that some of our amazing Year 10 and Year 11 students will soon be receiving their **exclusive invites** to join us on a reward trip to **Thorpe Park!**

This special day out is to celebrate those who have successfully completed our **On TRACK to KS4** initiative and shown incredible resilience, hard work and commitment to our **TRACK values**

### Dates for your diary:

Year 11 – Friday **26th September 2025**

Year 10 – Friday **3rd October 2025**

Cost: Around **£25 ticket** + coach travel  
(more details to follow!)

Keep an eye out for invites and permission slips coming home soon – places must be confirmed to join the trip!

We are SO proud of our students – now it's **time to celebrate** their achievements with a well-deserved, unforgettable day!



Truth

Resilience

Ambition

Community

Kindness



# Prom Save the Date



## SAVE THE DATE

We're pleased to announce that **Year 11 Prom 2026** is officially booked!

**Thursday 9th July 2026**

**The Loft, Street** – a stunning venue for an unforgettable night!

Get ready for an evening of glamour, laughter and memories that will last a lifetime. More details will follow in the months ahead, but for now...

Mark your calendars...

Spread the word...

Start dreaming about those outfits...

Let's make it the prom of all proms!



Truth

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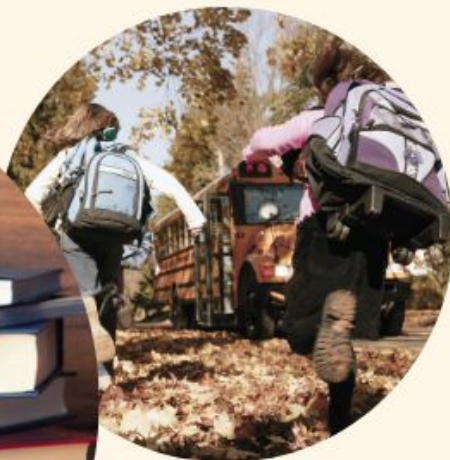
# Safeguarding Spotlight



[Link to the full online brochure for Mental Health Events](#)

## FREE PARENT & CARER WEBINARS

Hosted by Somerset's Mental Health Support  
Team  
Autumn 2025



[BIT.LY/MHSTINFO](https://bit.ly/mhstinfo)

[BIT.LY/YOUNGSOMERSETMHST](https://bit.ly/youngsomersetmhst)



SOMERSET MHST

@SOMERSETMHST



Truth

Resilience

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Kindness



# Safeguarding Spotlight



## DADS TUNING INTO KIDS™

A FREE SEVEN-SESSION PROGRAMME  
FOR FATHERS OF SCHOOL AGED  
CHILDREN



Would you like to learn how to help  
your child manage feelings such as  
worry, frustration & anger?

Dads tuning into kids teaches you how to help  
your child understand and manage feelings  
(Emotional intelligence).

Children with good emotional intelligence:

- ✓ Have better concentration at school
- ✓ Have greater success with making and keeping friends
- ✓ Are more able to manage conflict with peers
- ✓ Are more able to calm down when upset or angry

Register  
here!



### WHEN?

November 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>  
& 25<sup>th</sup>

December 2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>  
6-8pm

**\*\*Via Teams**

You will need a device  
& good WIFI



Truth

Resilience

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Kindness



# Safeguarding Spotlight



**AUTISM & ADHD**  
**SUPPORT GROUP** *Teen girls* **FREE**

Learn to manage and understand your neurodiverse brain.  
Sessions include psycho-education, strategies and creative activities

**WITH SPECIALIST ADHD COACH & PSYCHOTHERAPIST, LAUREN RICHARDS**

**When: 15<sup>th</sup> October to 10 December**  
**4.45 - 5.45 pm**  
**Where: St Dunstan's School, Glastonbury**

**Sign up:**  
**Email [larkcoaching@gmail.com](mailto:larkcoaching@gmail.com)**  
**to book your place**



## Careers



### FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Get the latest updates and celebrate student achievements with us.  
We're giving away **£100 worth of Amazon vouchers** in September.  
Simply follow and share to be automatically entered to win!

#### Instagram

@bridgwatercollege | @canningtoncollege | @strodecollege |  
@tauntoncollege | @universitycentresomerset

#### Facebook

Bridgwater College | Cannington College | Strode College | Taunton  
College | University Centre Somerset



TRANSFORMING LIVES



Truth

Resilience

Ambition

Community

Kindness



## Library Information (Reminder)



St Dunstan's library is a quiet space for reading and doing homework. It is available for all students to use Mon-Thurs at break, lunch and after school, with lots of clubs happening throughout the year! (Club info coming soon).

Every student is allowed to check out a book and take it home for two weeks. The student will need to come back before the due date and return it, or renew it for another two weeks. No book can leave the library without being checked out by the librarian. If a student has an overdue book, they won't be able to check out another book until the overdue is resolved.

We understand that life can be chaotic and water bottles can leak so if you damage or lose a book, don't panic, you can replace it with a second hand copy. At the end of the year, any overdue or lost books will be invoiced through Arbor so we can replace them.

KS3 students have to have a reading book in school for library lessons as part of their equipment. This can be a book from home or from the library (or we have a book rehoming zone where students can take a book for free and keep it). Students have to prepare this in advance of their lessons.

And the most important rule... happy reading!



# Library Young Adult KS3 Letter to Parents

St Dunstan's library caters to all secondary school age students and therefore there are books within the library suitable for ages 11-16. Certain books are marked as 'young adult' as these have a suggested age range of around Year 9 upwards. This is because the books contain more mature content and/or themes (such as The Hunger Games, or the Powerless series), though they are still all children's books.

According to children's publishers, the young adult age bracket ranges from 12-18. As this would include almost all of our books, we instead label books that have an interest level around 14+ as YA. Even this is a very subjective bracket, and the process of labelling our books is constantly in progress. If you would like any further information on how we choose books for our library, we have a collections policy that can be made available to you.

We feel that independent choice is important for students to be able to grow and make their own decisions on their taste and preferences when reading. Often a student will choose a book and return it if they find it is not suitable for their reading or interest level. This is an important part of developing their reading. However, if you would prefer your child not to be allowed to read books marked YA, please email expressing this to [secretary@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk) with the subject heading 'FAO Library YA Opt Out' and we will restrict your child's account and won't allow them to take YA books out of the library. If you are happy with your child choosing from the whole range of our library, then you need not do anything, as this will be our default stance.

We look forward to welcoming your child to the library soon for their next reading adventure.

Best wishes

Mrs O Morris, Librarian and Reading Champion