



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 St Dunstan's such a great community and school to be a part of.

This weekly newsletter is your essential guide to supporting your child. It is packed with important dates, event details and news. Please take a few minutes each week to read it so you don't miss a thing.

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



Truth

Resilience

Ambition

Community

Kindness



Key Information

Key Dates

Tuesday 21st- Ks3 Celebration Event for students with 96% attendance and 150+ Points

Ks3 Celebration assemblies

Wednesday 22nd- Ks3 Celebration assemblies

Thursday 23rd- Ks4 Celebration assemblies

Non school uniform day- all students will be allowed to wear non school uniform in exchange for a food bank donation

Friday 24th October- School Closed- Inset Day

School photos will take place on the first week back after half term. More information to follow

Important Information

Student Arbor App

Thank you for your continued support and patience around accessing the student app. We know that some students are struggling to access due to passwords issues. If this is the case, should students should

- Go to <https://login.arbor.sc/> via a desktop browser
- Enter school email gmail address. It will not recognise personal emails.
- Click 'forgot my password'. Arbor will then send a reset email to the gmail account
- Open school gmail, open Arbor email and follow instructions to reset.

Homework

We are now setting homework on Arbor. Staff will start to close these down over the next few weeks so that the list of tasks do not build up. Students should continue to log in to google classroom to access work and resources



Key Information

Year 11

We will be sharing the Year 11 mock exam timetable with families shortly. We encourage all families to use our designated webpage to help families navigate Year 11, Revision and examination periods. Please follow the link below-

<https://www.stdunstansschool.com/information-for-students-and-parents/carers/year-11-exams-information-and-support.htm>

Jumpers

As the temperature continues to fall, we are seeing a rise in students wearing the optional jumper in addition to the blazer. A polite reminder to families that these should be **V Neck navy blue jumpers only**. Students **should not wear round neck sweatshirts or branded jumpers**. We kindly ask that you make sure that students wear the correct jumper as we move into the new half term.

Energy and Sugary Drinks

At the start of the new term, **all energy, sports and sugary drinks will no longer be allowed** to be consumed on school site. We ask that students bring a water bottle to stay hydrated during the day, drinks will also be available in the canteen.



Weekly Attendance Update

Thinking about skipping the final few days? Why this is teaching the wrong life lessons

As many of you are aware, we have revamped how we handle attendance this term - our goal is simple: support every single student to attend school and get the full benefit of all the opportunities here.

We want to thank all our families for being so supportive and cooperative over the past 7 weeks. Your help has been appreciated in making sure your child's attendance stays strong. We have seen so many great examples—families having proactive and positive chats with us, rescheduling things to make school a priority, or just encouraging their kids to "just go in today." These actions and many more, prove how powerful it is when parents and the school work together for the benefit of the child.

Whilst we're celebrating all this success, we also need to be very honest and open about one recurring challenge: attendance tends to drop dramatically in the final weeks. As the end of term approaches, an all-too-familiar pattern starts to unfold: classrooms have empty spaces, attendance declining day by day and students starting their breaks before the final bell rings. It's become almost expected that the last four days of term are "optional." But here is the truth we are too polite to say out loud: letting students miss school at the end of term is not teaching them life lessons about commitment, community, and character.

Let's be honest—no one would dream of taking a random Thursday and Friday off work two days before their annual leave. Can you imagine calling your boss and saying, "We're going on holiday Saturday, so I'm just not coming in this week?"

Weekly Attendance Update

School isn't just about grades. It's about routine, responsibility, and relationships. The final four days of a term carry just as much value as the first four.

Let's not forget—students are about to get 10 full days at home. That's over a week of rest, freedom, and family or unstructured free time.

Yes, some absences are unavoidable. Life happens and we understand that. But choosing to check out early as a matter of routine, or convenience, sets a precedent that commitments can be treated as optional—and that's not a lesson we want to teach or for them to learn.

In the real world, the finish line matters. How we end something says just as much as how we begin it. We need to start treating the final week with the respect it deserves. After all, the best habits are built not when it's easy, but when it's tempting to take the easy route—and we choose not to.

We are incredibly proud of the strong attendance culture we are striving to build together. Thank you again for your sustained effort and contribution to this. Your help, working with us, makes a real difference.

We ask for your continued support to reinforce the value of seeing things through to the very end. Let's continue our work together for these crucial final days and send our children into their break knowing they finished their term with full commitment, a sense of pride in their achievements and giving us the opportunity to celebrate this with them.



Weekly Attendance Update

How good is my child's attendance so far?



What does my attendance look like so far? Week 8

Band	Percentage	Number of days attended this year to date out of 32	Potential Days of Absence across the year if this continues	Potential hours of lost learning	Classification
1	100%	32	0	0	Perfect
2	98% to 100%	31	4	20	Excellent
3	96% to 98%	30	8	40	Good
4	93% to 96%	29	14	70	Requires Improvement
5	90% to 93%	28	38	190	Concerning
6	Below 90%	28 or less	40	200	Persistent absence

How can I support my child?

Keep the same Routine Maintain normal bedtimes and morning schedules. Do not let the anticipation of the break disrupt the consistent daily routine, which signals that school is still a priority.

Focus on the Value: Emphasize that the final days are for celebration, reflection, and friendship.

Prioritise Commitment: Use these days to teach a real-world lesson: Commitments must be seen through to the very end. Explain that finishing strong builds good habits and character.

Clear the Schedule: Proactively ensure all doctor's appointments, travel, and other non-urgent activities are booked *outside* of these final four days. Make attendance the only option.

IMPROVED ATTENDANCE AWARD



Students with improved attendance across a term will receive a letter from our Attendance Champion and 10 'On Track' Points. The most improved students will also be recognised in our celebration assemblies.

TERMLY ATTENDANCE AWARD

**ON
TRACK**

All students who have met or exceeded our termly attendance target (96%) and 'On Track' Point thresholds, will be invited to our end of term celebration events.

EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDANCE AWARD

All students who have achieved 98% or above at the end of each term, will receive a letter from the Headteacher, 50 'On Track' Points and be recognised in our celebration assemblies.

**CLUB AWARD**

St Dunstan's School
GLASTONBURY

If a student achieves 100% in a calendar month, they will receive a reward card and be entered into a prize draw to win Amazon vouchers. Students in the 100 Club will also be celebrated on our celebrations board and awarded 50 'On Track' Points.





On Track Update

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

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

86,362

Well done to all of our students!



On Track Update

'On Track' Celebration- Important Announcement

At the beginning of October, our students managed to reach the 50,000 'On Track' Points threshold. Since then the accumulation of points has continued, with our students now sitting on a whole school total of 86,000 points. To put this into some context, this total is now 50,000 points more than this time last academic year.

In order to recognise and celebrate every student for their contribution to this total there will be a **non-school uniform day on Thursday 23rd October**. Students will be able to wear their own clothes in exchange for a donation to the food bank.

Recommended donations include- Tinned goods; Pasta; Rice; Long life juices, Long life milks; Biscuits or any other item with a long best before date. All donations will be collected on the front gate at the start of the day.

Whilst this is a day for celebration and recognition, we are keen to make sure that the students understand the expectations for the day in advance so the day is a success. Please read the information below carefully-

- This is a normal school day. Students will be expected to uphold our high expectations for behaviour and conduct in lessons and around the school site.
- Mobile phones must remain in bags and not seen and not heard.
- Students will be required to bring all equipment required for lessons, this includes PE kit if there is a timetabled lesson. We advise that students continue to bring school bags.

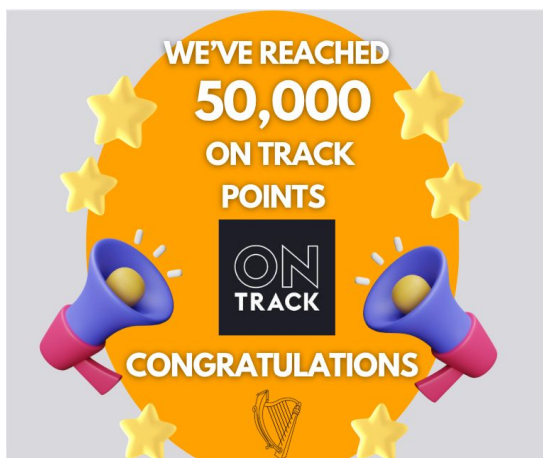


On Track Update

- Please ensure that students dress suitably for a day at school and for the time of year. This means that students should not wear crop tops and shorts and skirts should be appropriate length. Similarly, tops and shirts should be suitable for a school setting. This means there should be no inappropriate slogans or motifs that would be considered offensive or not age appropriate.
- Facial piercings are also not allowed and students will be asked to remove these.
- Students are welcome to continue to wear school uniforms if they feel more comfortable to do so.
- If the school has any concerns about a child's appearance, we will make contact with home and take appropriate steps to resolve the matter before the student attends lessons.

We hope that all families will follow these guidelines so that we have a positive day and students are celebrated for the positive start to the school year.

If you have any questions or queries regarding the day, please feel free to make contact.





Year 7 Vivary Park Trips



Last week, three groups of Year 7 students enjoyed exciting and adventure-packed trips to Vivary Park.

Each day was filled with kindness, teamwork and plenty of encouraging cheers. From leaping and climbing to solving tricky challenges, everyone got stuck in and gave it their all.

It was an absolute pleasure to accompany them – well done, Year 7!



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Somerset Careers Fair



It was our pleasure to take year 10 and a small group of year 11s to attend Somerset Careers Fair in Yeovil last week.

The event gave students the chance to discuss career and post 16 opportunities with a variety of providers and even take away some goodies!

As always, our students were a credit to us and it was nice to see some of our partner schools also in attendance.





Year 11 Revision



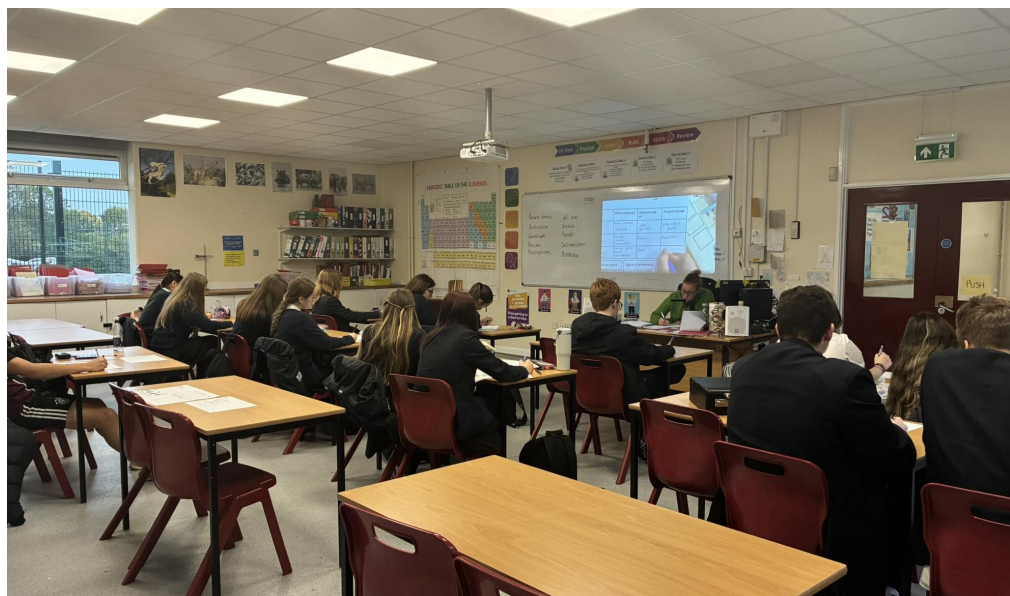
Year 11 Fortnightly After-School Revision Sessions have begun!

We're excited to share that our fortnightly after-school revision timetable is now up and running — with sessions available almost every day.

Last year, these revision sessions made a huge positive impact on student attainment, and we're confident they'll do the same this year.

We strongly encourage all students to attend every session available to them. Let's make the most of this opportunity for success... only 2 weeks until mock exams begin!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week A	Hospitality & Catering	NA - Staff Training	Science	English	History /Music
Week B	Media Studies		Art	French/DT	Geography /Music



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Year 11 Revision Guides

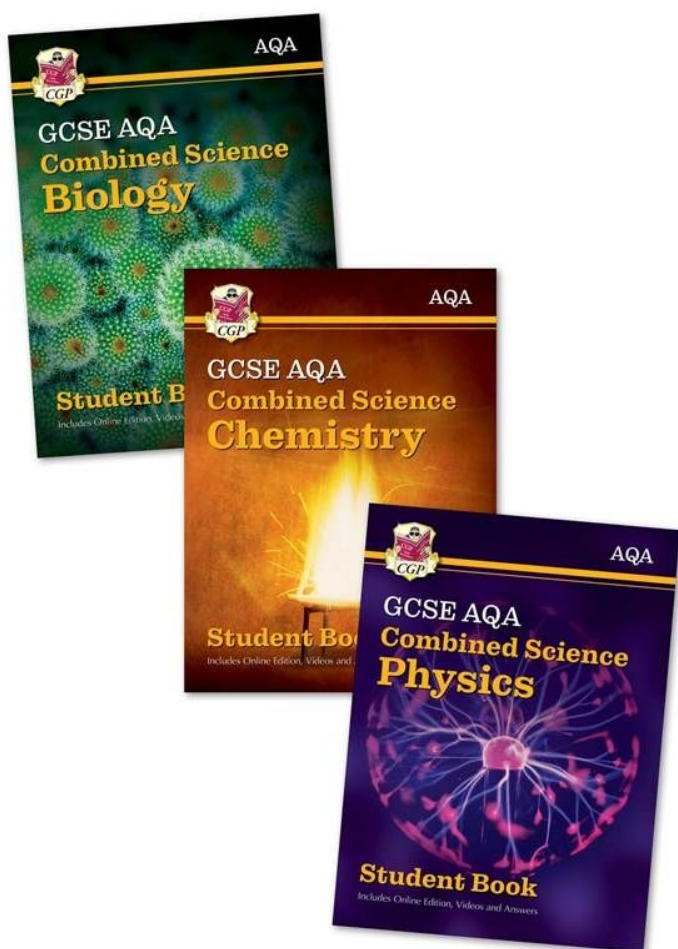


Discounted revision guides for GCSE subjects are now available for Year 11 students.

Parents can place their orders through the 'Parent Shop' on the Arbor app.

Deadline: Friday 17th October

These resources can be a great way to support your child's exam preparation.





St Dunstan's Library presents...



THE BOOK NOOK



Welcome to the Book Nook, the section of the newsletter where we update you with what has been happening in the Library.

We are continuing our Just Write Club story snippet series and this week we have **Ellis**, in **Year 7** who has made a great start on a thrilling tale...

Daggers

It was a cold December night. A harsh, bitter wind penetrated anyone who walked at this hour in the night. Nobody walked along the city streets. Except one.

Charlie woke up with a start. He glanced at his alarm clock and saw it was nine o'clock in the morning. He slipped on his grey slippers and walked down the stairs. He entered the downstairs bathroom and looked at the mirror. His messy blonde hair was all frizzy and his eyes were dark green in one, and in the other a blood-orange.

He left the bathroom and walked into the kitchen. The marble table stood in the corner. On the other side of the kitchen was his dad, spreading marmalade on a piece of toast, and butter on the other.

"Morning," he said, sliding the marmalade toast onto one of the china plates and the buttered toast onto the other.

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Safeguarding Spotlight



TWENTY-FOUR APPS PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



SNAPCHAT allows users to see your location and can keep photos/videos for up to 24 hours.



OMEGLLE is an anonymous video app that critics believe is a perfect app for unsuspecting predators.



TINDER is a location-based dating app and website.



CALCULATOR% is one of several secret apps that allows used to hide photos, videos, files, and history.



GRINDR is a location-based dating app and website.



MEETME is a location-based dating app encouraging strangers to meet in person.



PERISCOPE allows users to stream audio and video content and share it with other users.



SKOUT is a location-based dating app and website.



BADOO is a location-based dating and social media app with the ability to send photos, videos, and messages.



HOUSEPARTY is a live chatroom for texts and video. Users have reported explicit content, racial slurs, and more.



WHATSAPP is a messaging app that allows users to send photos, videos, and make calls and video chats.



ASK.FM is known for cyberbullying.



BLENDR is a location-based dating app and website.



KIK is a direct messaging app that allows anyone to contact anyone else with unlimited access.



WHISPER is an anonymous social network that promotes sharing secrets with strangers.



LIVEME uses geolocation while livestreaming videos allowing users to see your exact location.



BUMBLE is a dating app that requires a female to make the first contact. Fake accounts are known to be created.



XBOX LIVE is an online service that behaves as a social network and allows for chatting with strangers.



HOLLA is a video chat app. Users have reported explicit content, racial slurs, and more.



HOT OR NOT is a dating app where users to rate the profile of others and to see and chat with people in their area.



TIKTOK is a social app with limited privacy controls known for cyber bullying and explicit content.



WILDCRAFT is a multi-player gaming app that allows group chatting and has been linked to cyberbullying.



INSTAGRAM allows users to see your location and allows private messaging.



TWITTER is increasingly popular with teenagers and has been linked to cyberbullying.

***MONITORING APPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PARENTS. CHECK OUT BARK, NET NANNY, SECURLY AND MORE.**





A reminder that the following steps need to be followed for a successful login to the app:

1. Initial Web Login

Students must first log in to Arbor using a web browser (on a laptop or desktop) to activate their account, ensuring their password is current.

2. Students should use their school email address and password to log in (e.g. 3sleigh@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk).

3. Download the Arbor Student App

The app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store by searching for "Arbor Student".

4. Log in to the App, using the same login and password they use for the browser.

After logging in, they can enable "Remember Me" to use fingerprint or face recognition for quicker access in the future.

If your child is struggling to access due to passwords issues. If this is the case, should students should

- Go to <https://login.arbor.sc/> via a desktop browser
- Enter school email address. It will not recognise personal emails.
- Click 'forgot my password'. Arbor will then send a reset email to the gmail account
- Open school gmail, open Arbor email and follow instructions to reset.

Once again, we appreciate your support in helping students become more independent in managing their learning and school responsibilities.

For further guidance, please follow the link below-

<https://youtu.be/QN6j66N6N94>

New Governors Wanted!



MN Midsomer Norton
SP Schools Partnership

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, please contact

secretary@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk