

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/ Carers

Welcome to this week's newsletter. As we move into this busy period, please take the time to read about what we have been doing this week as well as everything that will be happening in the final few weeks of term.

Key Updates for Families

Wednesday 11 December

Year 10 Hospitality & Catering trip to Bristol
9:30-14:45

Year 11 Leavers Celebration Evening 18:00 pm

Thursday 12 December

Festive Jumper Day- £1 Donation
Christmas showcase 18:00pm

Friday 13 December

British Library Medieval Women Livestream-
students in Year 10 will be invited to participate

Christmas Carols in Town centre- Organised by
the Music department

There may be an occasion when a school closure takes place due to extreme weather such as snow and ice. If the school is forced to close we will try to make a decision as soon as possible before liaising with the bus services and Local authority. Families will be notified of any decision via our Facebook page and our website.



06.12.24

NEXT WEEK
ASSEMBLY
FOCUS:

The new
Teaching and
Learning cycle

Key Dates

Thursday 12th
December:
Festive
Jumper Day
AND the
Christmas
Showcase

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

[Click here for
term dates](#)



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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Items to Celebrate

Thank You to Miss Kench and Mrs Potter for their organisation of the Bath University Trip on Tuesday. We hope this experience gave students an opportunity to broaden their horizons and aspirations.

Thank You to Miss Hart and our Key Stage Three students for producing the Christmas Decoration stars. These have been used to decorate the Tree in the town as well as our St Dunstan's Tree in the church. Last week it was lovely for me to join our Year 7 students, helping to decorate the tree in the town centre. There were some fantastic decorations produced not only by our students but also from our primary feeder schools. Well done to everyone for your contribution.

Our On Track Positive Points now sits at 74,391 This is now over 32,000 more than the whole of last academic year. Our total also shows that students have accumulated over 35,000 points since October half term and on average, each student has been rewarded with 145 On track Points. Well done to everyone for continual hardwork and effort. Let's see if we can get to 100,000 by Christmas!



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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Thank You to our fabulous PTA for their continued efforts and fundraising. Last weekend volunteers organised the parking for the Frost Fayre, which raised over £800. We really appreciate the time that is dedicated to fundraising and your commitment to supporting our staff and students. It makes a real difference and we are very lucky to have you!

Wishing everyone a good weekend, trying to stay warm and dry if you can!

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes
P Balkwill



06.12.24

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Christmas Lunches



On Wednesday 18 December we will be organising our Christmas Dinner. Students will be able to purchase a 2 course meal from the canteen for £3.20

Our meals will be as follows-

Turkey wrapped in Bacon with a stuffing centre,
Chipolata ,
Roast Potatoes,
Carrots,
Sprouts,
Gravy

Vegetarian Nutless Roast Slice ,
Roast Potatoes,
Carrots,
Sprouts,
Gravy

Pudding
Chocolate Sponge

In order to provide students with enough space to sit, eat and enjoy this meal, we will be organising a separate sitting time for each year group. We hope that this will give the students the opportunity to participate and enjoy a traditional Christmas meal with their friends. The arrangements will also mean that we will be adjusting the times of the school day and break times. We will share these with the students in the days preceding.

Please be advised that we will be providing Christmas meals only during Lunch service on Wednesday 18 December. Students will be able to purchase snacks and cold food during breaktime as usual. There will be sandwiches available at lunchtime as an alternative to the Christmas meal also.



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PARENTS –

**GUIDING OUR CHILDREN THROUGH
THEIR EDUCATION IS ONE OF OUR
GREATEST ROLES.**



MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

Consistent support and motivation from you plays a pivotal role in their success, and this begins with school attendance – that isn't just about adhering to school rules; it's about shaping their future, one day at a time.

**If your child is struggling with school attendance, our tips overleaf can help you help them.
Or if you have any concerns contact your child's school.**



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Attendance Update



Thank you to all parents for your support to ensure that your child attends school as regularly as possible. We would also like to take this opportunity to outline to you how we intend to encourage and support good attendance across the year.

We know that sometimes our pupils cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them and other students. Medical advice is clear however that children with mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance [is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/health-a-z/illnesses-and-conditions/a-z/child-illnesses-and-conditions/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

We also know that pupils fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school. At St Dunstan's School we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our pupils in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

The advantages of good attendance are numerous:

- **Improved Academic Performance:** Regular attendance helps children stay up-to-date with their lessons and reduces the likelihood of falling behind.
- **Social Development:** Consistent attendance allows children to form and maintain friendships, enhancing their social skills and sense of belonging.
- **Routine and Structure:** Attending school regularly helps children develop a sense of routine and structure, which is beneficial for their overall development.
- **Increased Opportunities:** Students who attend school regularly are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities and special events, enriching their school experience.
- **Better Mental Health:** Being part of the school community can boost children's confidence and self-esteem, contributing to better mental health.



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We also know that parents/carers can have a significant effect on good attendance and we would really appreciate your continued help and support ensuring that your child comes to school every day so that they can get the best possible outcomes. We want to work with you to achieve this in the following ways-

- Monitor and track attendance and punctuality on a daily basis, making contact if your child is absent
- Students are given a minimum attendance target of 96% attendance for the year
- Our tutors will contact families, when there has been periods of absence to offer support and discuss any concerns that could become a barrier to school
- Our Pastoral team will offer support for individuals and families to help remove barriers to learning
- We will provide assemblies and personal development sessions on the importance of attendance and punctuality and its link to the world of work and professional practice
- In school attendance clinics are intended to discuss with students the importance of attendance and any barriers they may be facing
- Where attendance becomes a concern, we will make referrals to our Education Welfare Officer to support families and individuals
- Work with the Local authority to tackle persistent absenteeism
- Consider all applications for planned absence, authorising requests that fall within Department of Education guidelines
- Offer adaptations and adjustments to support students to reintegrate back into the school following a significant absence

As part of our approach to securing high attendance, we intend to recognise and celebrate students for high and improved attendance across months, terms and the year. (Please see next page). These rewards are intended to recognise students for consistently high or exemplary attendance. Rewards are also given to students for improved attendance as well as meeting our minimum attendance target of 96% each term.



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Rewards & Recognition



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



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

EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDANCE AWARD

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



CLUB AWARD

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If a student achieves 100% in a calendar month, they will receive a reward card and 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'



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YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD BY:

- ensuring your child understands the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality.
- asking about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities.
- discussing any problems they may have and inform their Form Tutor to pass on concerns.
- not allowing them take time off school for minor ailments – particularly those which would not prevent you from going to work.
- arranging appointments after school hours, at weekends or during the holidays, to prevent disruption to your child's education and to the school.
- being open and willing to work with us to improve your child's attendance.



If you are concerned about your child's school attendance, it's best to contact their school first. Our dedicated Attendance Team are on hand to support pupils and families.

For more information about school attendance visit our website: www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com/attendance

We're here to help if you need it.



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Festive Jumper Day



ST DUNSTAN'S FESTIVE JUMPER DAY

£1 RECOMMENDED DONATION



Save the Children

THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER

WEAR A FESTIVE JUMPER TO SCHOOL
INSTEAD OF YOUR BLAZER



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Tickets on sale now
Get them while they last!



Christmas Showcase

Thurs 12th December

Drama, Dance, Music and speech
performances from our wonderful students.

Tickets available from reception
£2 students
£3 adults



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Bath University Trip



Year 11 students visited Bath University today where they were fortunate to have a campus tour with university ambassadors. Students were taken around the halls of residence , Student Union , Student Services and lecture halls . This gave students an insight into what university life would be like, learning and living.

Students then met in the auditorium where they had a 'why go to uni?' talk . This was interesting and gave students the chance to ask questions and understand the benefits of going to university and the different routes they could follow.

We then explored Bath Christmas Market where students had some time to get in the festive spirit, do some Christmas shopping and enjoy the beautiful city of Bath.



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Bath University Trip



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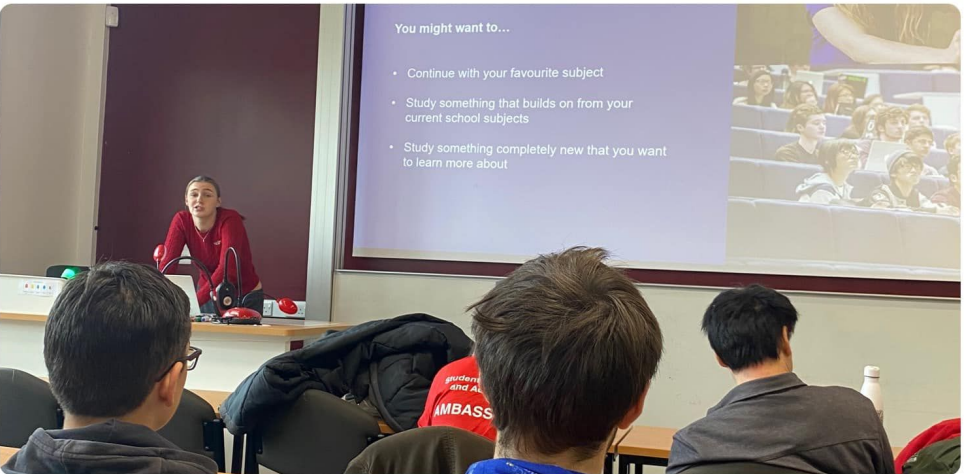
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Bath University Trip



- You might want to...
- Continue with your favourite subject
 - Study something that builds on from your current school subjects
 - Study something completely new that you want to learn more about



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Bath University Trip



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Library Fundraising



The library will be fundraising to raise money to buy new books!

Handmade crocheted flower bookmarks will be on sale starting next week in the library, handmade by students and staff and family alike. Perfect for Christmas gifts or for yourself!

**LIBRARY FUNDRAISER
BOOKMARK SALE**

AVAILABLE FROM THE LIBRARY AT
BREAK AND LUNCH

**FLOWER BOOKMARKS ARE
£2 EACH**

ALL HANDMADE

GREAT AS CHRISTMAS GIFTS

ALL MONEY RAISED GOES TOWARDS NEW
BOOKS FOR ST DUNSTAN'S LIBRARY!



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BookBuzz



This term, Year 7 and 8 students have enjoyed taking part in the BookBuzz scheme, an initiative run by the charity Book Trust to encourage a love of reading for pleasure.

Students choose their own book to keep from a great selection of titles, and now have the opportunity to take part in a competition to write a review of their book. The best reviews from each class will be displayed in the library after Christmas.

This year's most popular choices were *Lost on Gibbon Island* by Jess Butterworth and *Steady for This* by Nathanael Lessore.

The scheme aims to show the importance of reading and give all students a book of their own to keep.

It will be great fun to swap books with a friend, once they have been read, and spread the 'bookish love'.



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Forest School



We had another busy day at Forest School this week. Students had a go at archery and fire making, along with a few forest games and delicious onion bhajis cooked on our open fire.

Another splendid afternoon had by all! Well done!



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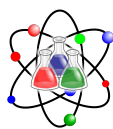
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Year 10 Science



Our Year 10 triple Science students completed a practical for their Organic Chemistry module this week.

Students were able to utilise their knowledge of alcohols and carboxylic acids to expertly make esters by condensation polymerisation.

They nailed it! Well done Year 10!



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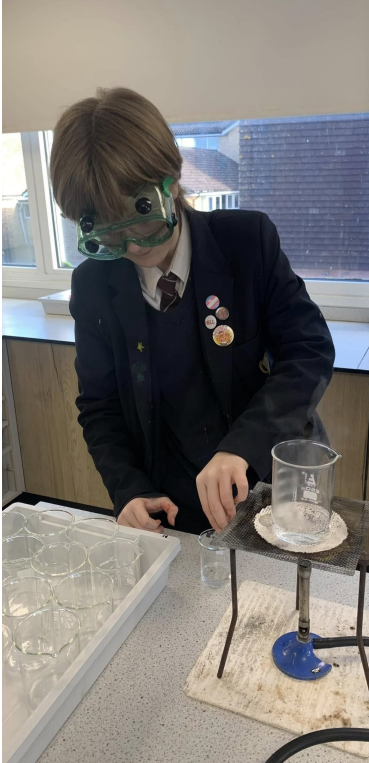
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Year 10 Science



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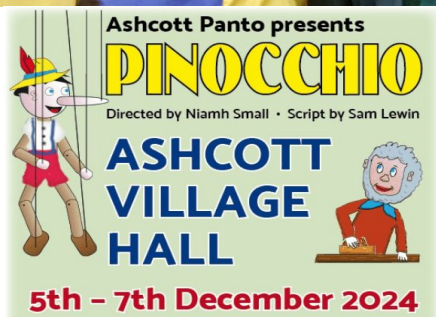


Student Spotlight



We have some actors walking our corridors at the moment! Ashcott Village Pantomime presents their production of Pinocchio this week and some of our students are the stars! Rosalyn takes the lead role as Pinocchio, mechanical nose and all! Reuben plays Jeremy Cricket and Honey is Poly, and according to our sources, they're all fantastic! The show's final night is tomorrow, and we wish them the best of luck (break a leg!)

If you have a student spotlight story you want to share, email it and any photos to secretary@stdunstansschool.com



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Staff Book Chat



This week we held another event to support staff well-being. Held in the library, staff gathered to talk about their current reads and swap ideas about books they thought others might like. This was all accompanied by a spicy tea and a mince pie!

Everyone's well-being matters at St Dunstan's School and little events like tonight can make a big difference!



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St Dunstan's Library presents...



THE BOOK NOOK



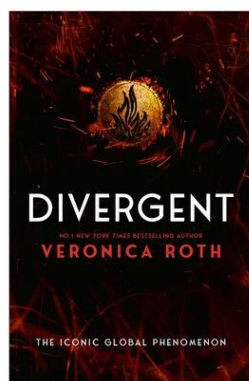
THE LIBRARY BOOK-VENT CALENDAR

The library has its own advent calendar now, thanks to Hazel creating such a beautiful hobbit hole!

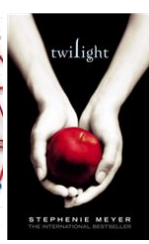
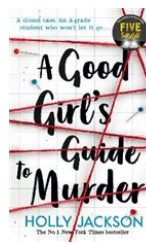
Each day a new book will be behind the doors. Come to the library and see what the book of the day, is every day in December...

Book Review by Ivy ★★★★★

Divergent is a fantastic book. When 16 year olds across the country have to take a test to assign them to their future faction, Beatrice Prior's test results come back as inconclusive, this means that she is Divergent. But when war breaks out the government goes on a hunt to eliminate the divergent, what will they do to keep their identity hidden?



Popular loans this week:



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Local Sports Camps booking now



WELLS
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
ENTERPRISES

EAT. SLEEP. BREATHE.
PERFORMANCE
NETBALL CAMP
2025

26 - 29 AUG, WELLS CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
wcsenterprises.co.uk/netballcamp2025

Performance Netball Camp 26th - 29th August 2025

Our 4-day intensive residential and day performance netball camp helps players really understand what it's like to be a pro netball player.

Elite coaches have curated a fully rounded programme that highlights what it takes to elevate your game to the next level. We are delighted that England Netball is supporting us once again this year. Past coaches include the Head Coach of France, the British Army and Team Bath.

The camp is for netballers aged 12 – 17, those looking to grow their game and those keen to get on a professional pathway. Residential: £400 + VAT, day: £325 + VAT. Book before 31st January 2025 for 10% off.

<https://wcsenterprises.co.uk/netballcamp2025/>



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Local Sports Camps booking now



EAT. SLEEP. BREATHE.
PERFORMANCE
CRICKET CAMP
2025



26 - 28 AUG, WELLS CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
wcsenterprises.co.uk/performance-cricket-camp/

Performance Cricket Camp **26th - 28th August 2025**

Our NEW three-day intensive residential/day performance cricket camp helps boys really understand what it's like to be a pro cricketer. Elite coaches have curated a fully rounded programme that highlights what it takes to elevate your game to the next level. The summer coaches include retired pros and county affiliated coaches.

The camp is for cricketers aged 12 – 17, those looking to grow their game and those keen to get on a professional pathway. Residential: £350 + VAT, day: £290 + VAT. Book before 31st January 2025 for 10% off.

<https://wcsenterprises.co.uk/performance-cricket-camp/>



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Local Sports Camps booking now



EAT. SLEEP. BREATHE.
PERFORMANCE
HOCKEY CAMP
2025



26 - 28 AUG, WELLS CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
wcsenterprises.co.uk/performance-cricket-camp/

Performance Hockey Camp 26th - 28th August 2025

Check out the website for details of our new Performance Hockey Camp which will be announced soon.

Residential: £350 + VAT, day: £290 + VAT. Book before 31st January 2025 for 10% off.

Booking opens soon

<https://wcsenterprises.co.uk/>



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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:

High-quality teaching, such as staff professional development.

Targeted academic support, such as tutoring.

Wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to success in schools, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support.



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Pupil Premium and Free School Meals

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/>

For further information relating to our Pupil Premium Plan and Free School Meals please visit our website-

<https://www.stdunstansschool.com/pastoral-care/supporting-our-students.htm>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

If you require any further information, or are unable to access the web links above, please do not hesitate to contact the academy for support.



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<u>O</u>rganised & Proactive	<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>
<u>N</u>eat & Tidy work	<p>Smart, well presented books demonstrating your best work</p>
<u>T</u>enacity	<p>Trying your hardest, rising to challenges, having a 'can do' attitude, working out solutions and taking ownership of your learning</p>
<u>R</u>eady, Respectful and Responsible	<p>Being a role model by consistently demonstrating our basic expectations</p>
<u>A</u>nswering, reading and listening like an expert	<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>
<u>C</u>ontributing to the class	<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>
<u>K</u>indness & Community minded	<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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Rewards & Recognition

ON
TRACK

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Bronze Award Badge - 200 points

Silver Award badge - 400 points

Gold Award badge - 600 points



TERMLY ACHIEVEMENTS



Students who achieve the 150 Track points and 96% attendance will participate in a specific activity on the last day of term.

ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENTS

At the end of the school year, students who meet the correct threshold will be united to join in a Celebration Carnival.

Student targets for this activity will include:

- 500 positive points
- 96% attendance
- Maximum 40 behaviour points.



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Rewards & Recognition

ON
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ATTENDANCE

Students who achieve 100% attendance over a set period, are recognised as members of the 100 Club and entered into a prize draw.



ROLL OF HONOUR



Students will be rewarded for consistently outstanding work, behaviour and effort. 20 behaviour points will be awarded and students will be celebrated on the 'On Track' celebration board.

PRAISE CARDS

Teachers will allocate a rewards card to students within their classes that demonstrate:

- An exemplary piece of classwork
- An exemplary piece of written work
- Have an exemplary lesson
- Consistently show their best



CELEBRATION ASSEMBLIES



Termly assemblies recognising individual and collective achievements.



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