

July 2023 Newsletter

Headteacher's Address

This has been another good year for the school in which we have seen numbers grow and ambition soar. As you will see from the items in this newsletter, staff and students have been very busy with a range of activities encompassing practical, artistic, physical and academic endeavours. As I write, we are in the throes of a very successful activities week – more on this later in the newsletter.

Well done to everyone and, as ever, a huge thank you to staff for their willingness to give up their time and go the extra mile for students. This was particularly evident in all the extra sessions run after school and during the holidays to support Year 11 with their revision in the run up to the exams. Well done to Year 11 for attending and for their positive attitude towards their exams – we are looking forward to seeing you on results day – 24th August. As Year 11 move on to their next steps, we look forward to welcoming our new Year 7 students. We had a fantastic day with them on July 4th – they impressed us with their enthusiasm and willingness to participate. We know they will be great St Dunstan's students and we are looking forward to seeing them in September.

Speaking of September, we have some new staff joining us – Ms Levy in English, Ms Brown in Geography, Mr Green in Science, Mr Ward in French – Mr Ward is also taking on the role of Head of Key Stage 4 and Ms Garland who is our 'new' Assistant Headteacher as well as a teacher of English. I have put 'new' in inverted commas as Ms Garland actually joined at the start of this term and is already proving to be an asset to the school. We will have a feature on our new staff in our next newsletter - I know our students will make all of our new staff feel welcome in our community.

As some staff start their journey with us, we also have to say goodbye to some colleagues who are leaving us for pastures new. More is written later in this newsletter but I would like to thank Ms Tilesi and Mr Timm for their hard work as teachers in the school. I would also like to pay tribute to Mrs Hale and Mrs Chinnock who have been such integral members of the school for so many years (13 and 16 respectively). Over those years, they have both had a significant impact on the lives of the young people they work with enabling them to succeed when they thought it wasn't possible. They will both be very much missed; our love goes with them. As you will see, we also say goodbye to Kama McKenzie as chair of governors. Kama has been a real advocate for the school and has brought so much to the role – expertise, advice, support and good humour – I would like to thank her for all she has done and wish her all the best for her future plans.

Looking forward to next year, we will have around 500 students in the school. We are introducing a new rewards system linked to our TRACK values whereby housepoints, as well as counting towards the House Cup, can be used as 'currency' – the Dinnie Dollar – to purchase rewards from a school shop. The prefects will be running this shop and a student panel from across the year groups, have created the list of rewards and their 'prices'. Thanks go to Mr Atkinson for all his hard work on this – we are all very excited about it and looking forward to seeing students spending their hard earned dollars.

We have exciting times ahead and a great year to look forward to. I hope you all have a restful summer and we look forward to seeing all students back in September.

Mrs Bevan

A Message from the Chair of Governors

With a heavy heart I have stood down as Chair of Governor, I have been a Governor for St Dunstan's Local Governors Board for nearly 8 years. I have been privileged to have seen so many positive changes take place; joining the Midsomer Norton Academy Trust (benefiting from their support and resources), the journey from Ofsted Inadequate to Good, the ASC base development, adapting during Covid and outcomes for students improving.

What has remained consistent over those years is the passion, dedication, care and compassion of the staff. Being a Governor gives you real insight to understand the tenacity and creativity of these professionals who are so committed to our children.

Volunteering as a Governor carries many responsibilities; but I have enjoyed being part of the governance structure to ensure there is accountability and scrutiny - being a 'critical friend'. It has been rewarding, interesting and insightful. If you think you might be interested in becoming a Governor in the future and want to understand more about the role - please make contact with the school office.

St Dunstan's School is a gem in our community, its values deeply embedded - it may be growing but it still has that small school feel because the staff know their students and go the extra mile everyday.

Kama McKenzie



Goodbye and Thank You

This term, we say goodbye to Mr Timm, Ms Tilesi, Mrs Hale and Mrs Chinnock.

Mr Timm came to us as a supply teacher and has stayed for a year teaching this year as well as being a year 8 tutor. Mr Timm has volunteered to help with extra curricular activities such as Youth Speaks and the Carnegie Award group. The genuine sadness that students have expressed about him leaving is a measure of the impact he has had in his short time with us. We wish him every success in his new role.

Ms Tilesi joined us during the pandemic – April 2020 in fact! Since joining us she has introduced a wide range of engaging activities to build students' confidence in their ability to build their skills in speaking another language. Students speak very warmly of her and the lessons she teaches; they certainly enjoy participating in language games! Ms Tilesi is moving to another school within the Trust and so this is more au revoir than farewell. Bon Chance Ms Tilesi!

Mrs Hale has decided to retire from her role as HLTA – having been with us for 13 years, this was a difficult decision but she is looking forward to some much needed time to relax. Mrs Hale has been an absolute diamond during her time with us; her calm presence and patience with students has enabled them to access the curriculum and to achieve more than they ever thought they could. Mrs Hale has also been a super support to staff – always willing to help out, get involved and generally make things better. The students with whom Mrs Hale has worked over the years have valued her help and have appreciated how she always goes the extra mile for them. As we wave goodbye, she goes with our love and gratitude – she will forever be a part of St Dunstan's.

And finally, Mrs Chinnock – our pastoral manager – is moving to a new role after 16 years at the school. Mrs Chinnock has such an array of skills that it is difficult to know where to start! She is efficient and conscientious in everything she does, able to turn her hand to new roles with a calm and competent approach and has a wicked sense of humour! More importantly, she has been a rock for the students - when they want to talk to no one else, they will always talk to Mrs Chinnock. She has an amazing ability to calm things down, look at both sides and help children find their own solutions to issues they are facing. Mrs Chinnock always knows the right thing to say and the right time to say it; she knows when to talk and when to allow quiet reflection; she understands teenagers and their emotions and is able to help them navigate the tricky waters of adolescence knowing that, all the time, she is there to support them. It is hard to imagine the school without Mrs Chinnock's presence – we know that she will be an absolute asset to her new employers. We will miss her every day and she will always be in our hearts. All the best to you Mrs Chinnock with our love.



Attendance

Attendance in school is not only vital for making good academic progress; it is also an important part in forming and sustaining friendships, participating in clubs and events as well as allowing good relationships within our school community to develop. The Department of Education set a minimum expectation that all children attend at least 96% of school days throughout the academic year. Everyone should aim to achieve this target and we work closely with our Education Welfare Officer to support students in doing this. We appreciate children get ill from time to time, so please call the school and leave a message on the absence option to advise if your child is unwell.

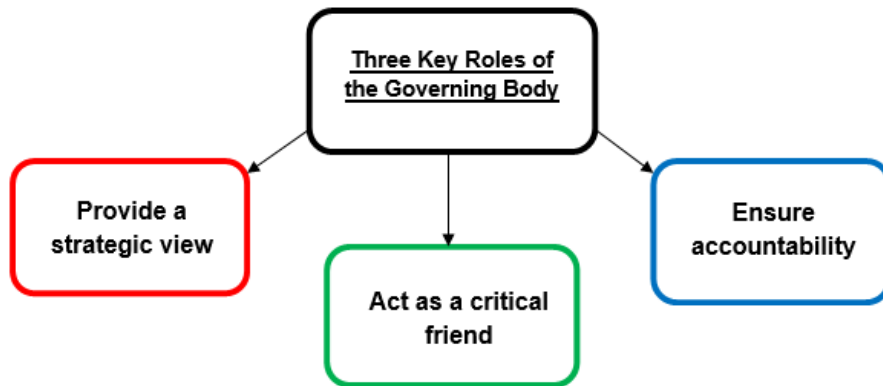
Uniform

At St Dunstan's we are proud of our uniform – wearing the correct uniform shows that we belong to the school community. As you will be aware, we have made a slight change to the school skirt – this is now the Charleston Drop Waist style. We have also, at the request of students, added the option to wear tailored, knee length shorts during terms 5 and 6. Please note that PE shorts/skorts should either bear the school logo or should be plain black; they should be no more than 25cm/1 inch above the knee. School shoes should be shoes not trainers – good quality shoes can be purchased at a reasonable price from a range of providers; some suggested styles are shown below as is the new skirt.



Governors

We have a dedicated board of governors at St Dunstons; their role is to ensure that policies and procedures are followed correctly, to carry out monitoring visits and to provide oversight and accountability. However, several are coming to the end of their term and we are in desperate need of volunteers to take up the mantle. If you would like to know more about this important and rewarding role, please email secretary@stdunstansschool.com with Governor Enquiry in the subject line.



PTA

The PTA have had a busy year and have raised significant funds for the school for which we are extremely grateful. New members are always welcome whether for a one off event or for a longer term commitment. The PTA have ambitious plans for this year:

Car parking at the school for the Extravaganza at the Abbey on 5th August and for the night at the Abbey on 25th August. There will be a fashion show at the school on 30th November – more details to follow next term. In addition, the school car park will be open for the Frost Fayre and the carnival – volunteers to staff it are always welcome. Various other events are in the pipeline and will be published next term. You can contact the PTA via their email address: stdunstanscommunitypta@gmail.com



Year 11

Our leavers' assembly and prom were a great success. Students gathered at school one more time to celebrate their time at school, share memories and some embarrassing photos kindly sent in by parents!



Our prom was held in the magnificent surroundings of 'The Loft' in Street. An extremely well turned out Year 11 enjoyed a fabulous meal, presentations and music in a great venue to say our farewells.

All the photos can be found on the tutor group Google Classrooms.



During their time here, our Year 11 students will have forged friendships that will last a lifetime and have learned life-lessons which will prove invaluable as they make their way in the world. The last few weeks and months have been packed with revision, preparation and, ultimately, completion of their final GCSE exams and the sharpening of focus from them all has been tangible.

We hope that the skills and personal attributes that the students have developed during their time with us, will allow them to continue to shine brightly.

GCSE result day is on Thursday, August 24th. Further details will be sent out regarding this.

We would like to thank parents/carers for their continued support this year.

Mrs Manning, Mrs Gregory and Mrs Thomason - soon to be Year 7 tutors!

Year 10

Year 10 have been out and about completing their work experience placements this week. They have been participating across a wide range of careers and working environments including, working with our local MP in Parliament, within our local feeder Primary schools and in childcare, environmental businesses and hospitality. Well done to all participants! Some photos below give some flavour of activities taking place.



Key Stage Three

It was a privilege during our final Celebration Assembly to reward the hard work for so many of our students. Students have shown the TRACK values throughout and are gaining star stickers in their TRACK packs. Well done to all!

Well done to Mendip house - leading house for both Attendance and House Points!

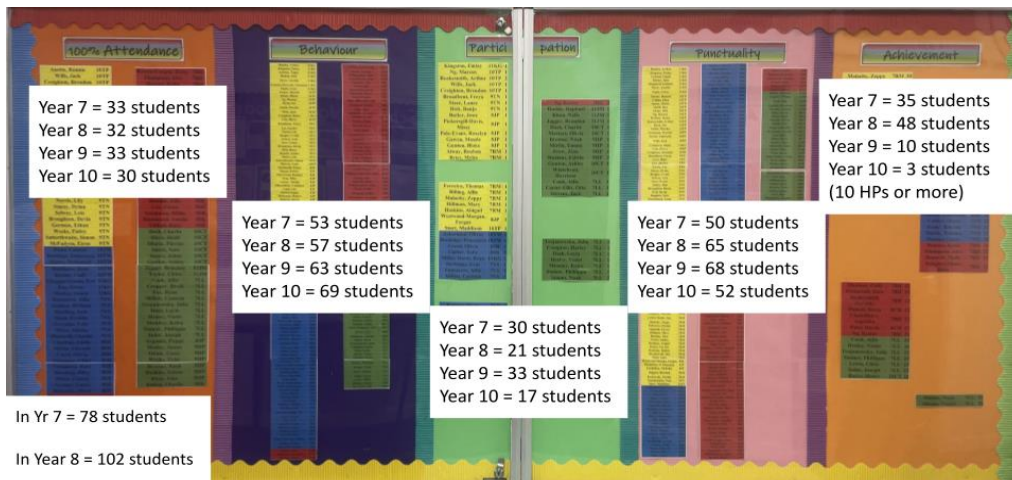
P.S if you have any ideas of logo designs for the different houses or house mottos that we could use, please email them to me .

Assistant Curate Kieron Rowley has been running his Thursday lunchtime club this term and it has been fantastic to see so many students taking part.

We are running a knitting, poetry, book club and mindfulness colouring club every Thursday lunchtime in the library. All are welcome. This will continue next academic year. Thank you Kieron

Have a wonderful Summer everyone - see you in September.

Mrs Easterbrook



In Yr 7 = 78 students
 In Year 8 = 102 students
 In Year 9 = 91 students
 In Year 10 = 93 students

Top House points = 26



Wall of fame students for Term 6

Well done to all of you

Frankie B
Jess M
Alfie C
Alex T
Angelika C
Chanelle D
Lucas G





House HP Ranks

1st	Mendip
2nd	Exmoor
3rd	Blackdown
4th	Quantock

Quantock	
7MWA	3600
8LLO	3130
10HPO	1999

44375 House Points awarded this year!

Blackdown	
7CPE	3390
8AKE	3575
9JPU	2860
10TNO	2235

Exmoor	
7HJE	2770
8VSM	5024
9GBR	2899

Mendip	
7JWA	3492
8ATI	4224
9RCO	2969
10AHA	2208

Houses

Houses

- We have 4 houses

Quantock

Exmoor

Blackdown

Mendip



What should our motto be for each house?

House Emblem/Logo?

Email any design ideas to Mrs Easterbrook
seasterbrook@stdunstansschool.com



English

Frome Writers' Collective Competition



We were very proud to hear that 5 of our Year 9 pupils were shortlisted for a creative writing competition entitled 'Difference'. The competition, organised by the Frome Writers' Collective, was judged by author Joffre Write and gave local children the chance to show off their writing skills in the form of a short story. Our budding writers have been refining their creative skills all year and this was a great reward for them.



Write Night

As the year came to a close, a final submission was made by a year 9 student - Ethan H. Having redrafted his idea and spending time perfecting it based on workshopping, St Dunstan's is proud to show the work in progress with an extract from his piece 'Blirg':

The shadowy monster loomed over the ship as the swelling waves threw the metal giant around the daunting surface of the ocean. The passengers let out a yelp in horror as people were getting tossed overboard like dolls. Under the gloomy water, a fish glanced at the boat with a hollow expression watching the onslaught of terror play out.

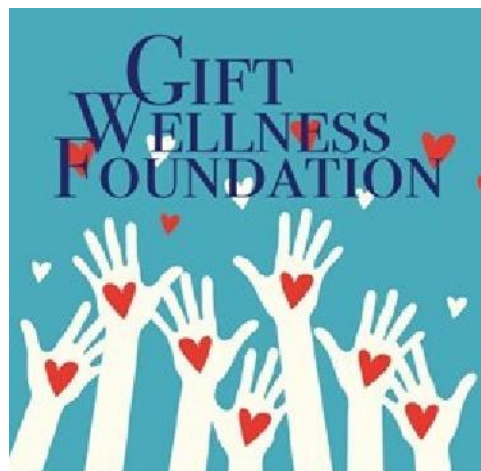
Hastily, the gloomy fog pulled away and left the remaining survivors in dismay. Most passengers had already flung themselves overboard in desperation, abandoning the oversized fortress to drift endlessly never to hold a passenger again. Sail boats drifted along the sunken giants path in search of the missing boat with maximum efforts but minimal results. Not too far away on the shore of an unknown beach a lone, battered and drenched man was just starting to wake up.

Waves slithered up the pebbly beach as the man struggled getting himself up before slamming back on the rocky floor bashing the side of his left eye. He lay there for a couple seconds before slowly pulling himself up again and wobbling up the shore. Confused, the man checked his surroundings and breathed heavily. Looking at the surroundings with the desolate sky, violent sea and the arcane woods; you could tell at a glance that it was an unwelcoming land...



Fundraising

A group of our wonderful students hosted a cake sale to raise money for the Gift Wellness Foundation. The foundation provides sanitary products to homeless women in the UK and women in crisis around the world. The cakes were delicious and they raised a fantastic £111.79!! Well done girls!



Performing Arts

Performance Showcase

Drama and Music students from all year groups across the school created an amazing evening of entertainment this term. Students took to the stage to present solos, poems, speeches and a piece of Theatre In Education about the environment. There were a variety of acts to cater for all tastes. The money raised from ticket sales will go towards the School Production in the summer term and the Christmas Showcase in December. We look forward to seeing you there. **Mrs Pulford and Mrs Hopton.**



Gardening Club

Our gardeners have worked so hard this month removing the last of the weeds, spreading compost and watering in the hot weather.

We were very excited to harvest some of the garlic that we planted way back in December. The runner beans are running high up the canes, the cabbages are getting very big now and the sweet corn looks amazing.

What a fantastic achievement for our first year of garden club, the team definitely earned those ice-lollies. Well done everyone and I look forward to seeing our pumpkin plant when we get back in September, have a great summer. **Mrs Bodman**



Personal Development

Personal Development Overview of the Year

Alongside our regular clubs and fixtures, as well as our leadership opportunities through the Prefect system and our School Council, plus the teaching to all year groups of Personal Social Health and Economic Education, we have had a busy year with regards to Personal Development. Below is an overview of some of the projects the school has undertaken or been involved with over the course of this year:

End Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign

On the 20th January our Years 9-11 again took part in the "End Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign" run by Collaborative Digital. This involved 240 students receiving an hour-long assembly and workshop, and 12 Year 10 students completing a half-day multi-media workshop. One of our podcasts was once again selected for the South-West of England finals. Another sterling result on this most important of campaigns.



Careers Fair

On the 23rd of March we took all of our Year 10 students to the Millfield careers fair, where there were representatives from over 40 higher education institutions, employers and overseas organisations. The Year 10 students loved the event, came away extremely inspired and we are very grateful to Millfield school for extending us the invitation to take part.

Somerset Wellbeing Survey

Over the course of a week in late April, 380 students from Years 7-10 took part in the county wide wellbeing survey that Somerset run once every two years. This is normally only for Years 8 & 10, but we believe this is so important we entered all our students in Years 7-10. The results of this survey, help us ensure we are protecting and supporting our young people, and inform our future policies and practices.



Coronation Drama event

To help mark the Coronation of King Charles, on the 8th of May, 4 students from Years 8-10 were involved in a drama event run by the city council celebrating the Glastonbury history of Coronation and Royals. The students thoroughly enjoyed the event and the council were extremely grateful and impressed with their participation.



Street martial Arts club - funded sessions

On the 11th of May we had a demonstration from the Street Mixed Martial Arts club to help promote ending violence on the streets, and the offer of 10 fully funded places at the club from Somerset county council. The students fully enjoyed their workout, and talk on discipline, and a number of students decided to sign up for the free offer.

Somerset Wells community intergenerational music project

Starting on the 18th of May, and running until the end of the year, 6 students from Years 9 & 10, took part in a music project to connect with older people suffering from dementia. Below is an extract from an email sent from the organisation:



"We wanted to get in touch to say the most enormous thank you for bringing your amazing students to our Singing for the Brain sessions. It was a joy and privilege to watch them blossom over the course of the time they were with us and seeing the relationships between the young people and our clients develop was incredibly special.

We were continually amazed at their intelligence and self awareness. To realise the value of the face-to-face interactions they were having with people from all different walks of life and to be able to articulate this in the way they did was really remarkable and showed maturity and wisdom beyond their years."

Collapsed Timetable Days

We ran 3 days this year when all students in the school were off timetable and experiencing enrichment activities. The themes and dates of these were as follows, with Year 11 students also always having a link to their Exam focus and studies:

25.11.22 Positive Mental Health

This involved a collaboration with the county organisation Mental Health Support Team (MHST), and involved their mental health practitioners delivering bespoke workshops on positive mental health, alongside our in-house training, for all our young people. A vital skill in today's modern world.



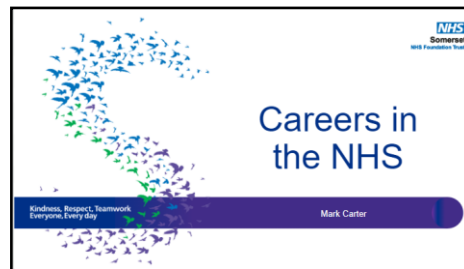
17.03.23 Overall Positive Wellbeing

This day focussed a lot on physical exercise, self-confidence and diet as huge contributing factors to overall positive wellbeing. Out of school activities were undertaken, as well as welcoming specialist agencies to deliver workshops.



14.06.23 Careers

Our Careers Day saw over a dozen professionals come into school to deliver bespoke workshops to our 7-10 students, allowing them to have meaningful encounters with professionals and employers. Students were given a free choice of 3 speakers to attend in their morning session for this day and excellent feedback was received.



Activities week 7-9

Our activities week was a resounding success this year, with a multitude of activities on offer for our students. See further details, in this newsletter, of some key trips and events.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Camp (already signed up)	Camp (already signed up)	Camp (already signed up)	Camp (already signed up)	Camp (already signed up)
Brean Leisure Trip	Brean Leisure Trip	DofE (already signed up)	DofE (already signed up)	DofE (already signed up)
Somerset Levels Bike Ride	Somerset Levels Bike Ride	Wise Up Outdoor Games	Hinkley Point Nuclear Power Plant Visit	Fleet Air Arm Museum
Music day	School Production day	School Production day	Circus Skills Day	Circus Skills Day
Bristol Wild Place Visit	Bristol Aquarium Visit	Glastonbury Way Walk	Glastonbury Way Walk	Bristol Wild Place Visit
Art Day	Art Day	Art Day	Art Day	Art Day
Mindfulness	Mindfulness	Mindfulness	Mindfulness	Mindfulness
Drama Day	Sports Day		Sports Day	Sports Day
Abbey Trip				

LifeBeat Summer Camp

We have once again teamed up with Lifebeat to offer 5 students the chance to participate in their exciting week long summer camp. We wish all our students attending the most enjoyable and enriching week possible.



Activities Week

A wide range of activities has been on offer during activities week this year:

- Art
- Bike Rides
- Brean
- Bristol Aquarium
- Bristol Wild Place
- Circus Skills
- Creative Writing
- Drama
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Fleet Air Museum
- Glastonbury Way Walk
- Hinkley Point
- Music
- Mindfulness
- Sports

A HUGE thank you to staff for all their efforts in putting on such a wide range of activities. Students engaged with all activities with good humour and enthusiasm. Here are a few pictures to give a flavour of the week:





Duke of Edinburgh

BRONZE DofE Award

On 20th/21st July, a group of 31 students undertook their Bronze expedition as a part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme. The programme, designed for anyone aged 14-24, consists of physical, skills, volunteering and expedition elements (with an additional residential section at gold level) which can all be tailored to the individual, allowing them to develop as a person and also express themselves and their interests in many different ways.

The expedition was based on the Quantocks, with students completing a 2 day expedition requiring them to hike for 14km (8.7miles) on the Thursday and around 12km (7.5miles) on the Friday. This was across undulating, challenging terrain in small groups where they put their skills to the test to complete an unaccompanied expedition. They developed map reading skills, compass and navigation skills as well as the ability to cook over an open fire.

Across the two days the students not only completed an impressive distance walking, they also demonstrated many valuable skills: the ability to work together as a team, resilience, confidence, perseverance, and above all how to appreciate the natural environment and its many wonders. All students finished the two days full of smiles and good memories from the expedition, and many of them are now looking forward to the possibility of completing their Silver awards too.

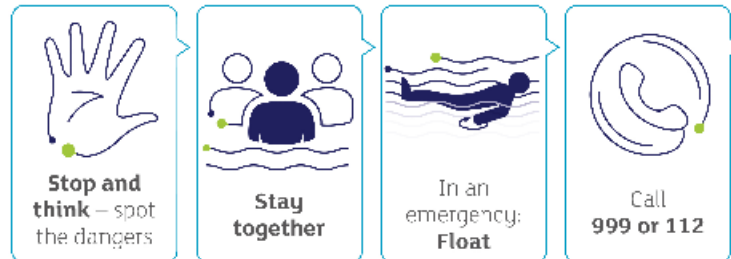
We will be introducing the Bronze Award to next year's Year 9 students during the Autumn term.
Mrs Potter and Mrs Manning



And finally . . .

Have a wonderful summer break; remember to use sunscreen (assuming it doesn't wash off!)
Remember the rules around water and road safety.

Water Safety Code



Key Dates:

- 1st and 4th September – INSET – only staff are in school
- 5th September 2023 – Only Year 7 in school
- 6th September 2023 – all students in school
- 20th October – end of term 1
- 30th October – INSET – only staff are in school

