

# Dormers Diary

## From the Head...

Welcome to the revitalised *Dormers Diary*, the first since I became Headteacher in September 2014. A new edition will be published every half-term, bringing you news from school and celebrating our many successes. This has been a term in which I have witnessed constant improvement in learning and teaching throughout the school. What I see makes me very proud of the Dormers Wells community.

The summer saw the school's strongest GCSE results for three years, with 50% of students achieving five or more passes at grades A\* to C including English and Maths. Those results set a high standard for our current Year 11s to live up to, but the strong attitude to learning seen in the recent mock examinations suggests that, with continued endeavour, they may be up to that challenge.

Also impressive have been the energy and diligence seen in our Sixth Formers' applications for higher education. Many have secured offers at leading institutions, including Russell Group universities, and one is preparing

for an interview at Cambridge University's Peterhouse College. We wish him luck.

The newest members of the school, our Year 7s, are also to be congratulated on their performance this term. Settling in to new surroundings isn't always easy and they have made the transition smoothly and efficiently.

In a major development for the school, we have introduced a new house system. It stems from research carried out amongst students that identified a desire for more competitive activities and a chance to belong to smaller communities within the DWHS family. Each student is now a member of one of six houses and is competing against their peers across disciplines including sport, art, science, poetry, chess and baking. The new House Cup will be presented next summer.

Finally, I want to highlight the achievement of students in raising over £1,000 for Children in Need. This is a remarkable figure, behind which is a great deal of hard work.



Róisín Walsh  
Headteacher

## Inside this issue...

P2	Lake District visit
P2	Work experience awards
P2	Lionheart Challenge
P2	Maths residential
P2	Checking student literacy
P3	Art project KICK start
P3	Children in Need
P3	Digital Day
P3	Girls' technical challenges
P4	Tasting University life
P4	House System introduced
P4	Be the Best You Can Be
P4	In Brief
P4	Diary dates

## Dormers Delights named market leader



Dormers Wells students won a competition for hosting the best stall at a Food Growing Schools London event at City Hall in mid-October.

The stall offered freshly-made produce including jams, chutneys, naan breads, biri-

yani curry, piri piri pasta and vegetables. All were produced with crops grown in the school's allotment garden. The stall, hosted by Sixth formers Bhupinder Ladher, Sukhdeep Thiara, Danielle De Sousa and Aqib Ahmad, made £115 profit.

The triumph was the culmination of work from across the school community, with food technology students producing the items for sale and BTEC Business students creating the *Dormers Delights* brand and conceiving a visual identity for it. The range brings together the quality of homegrown ingredients with a distinctive flavour of Southall's rich culinary variety.

The brand saw its first public outing at the Open Day event for prospective Year 6 students and their parents, which was held in October. That pilot event saw the students

make £90 profit, almost selling out the entire stock they had produced in the process. The money they made was reinvested into the project, helping to buy more jars and equipment.

*Dormers Delights* produce will be available at future Parents Evenings, alongside the plants that are already regularly on offer.





## Yr 8s take on Lake District



Ten Year 8 students have been conquering the rugged terrain of the Lake District. The half-term trip saw the students test themselves with activities including gorge walking, trapeze and an overnight hike.

Overcoming these challenges tests and develops students' perseverance and teamwork, encouraging participants' confidence and self-belief.

## Workplace excellence



Three Sixth Formers have received awards for their strong performance while undertaking periods of work experience.

The three – Abijeet Khanna, Kush Vara and Rami Shamel – were presented with their awards at an event held at the Houses of Parliament. The awards recognise the contribution of the work they have done and the communication, teamworking and interpersonal skills they have developed.

Abijeet (above) was recognised for his contribution while on placement at engineering consultancy ARUP, Kush for a successful spell at the Bank of England, and Rami for his contribution at Halperin. Each was ranked as 'Excellent' by the company they were with.

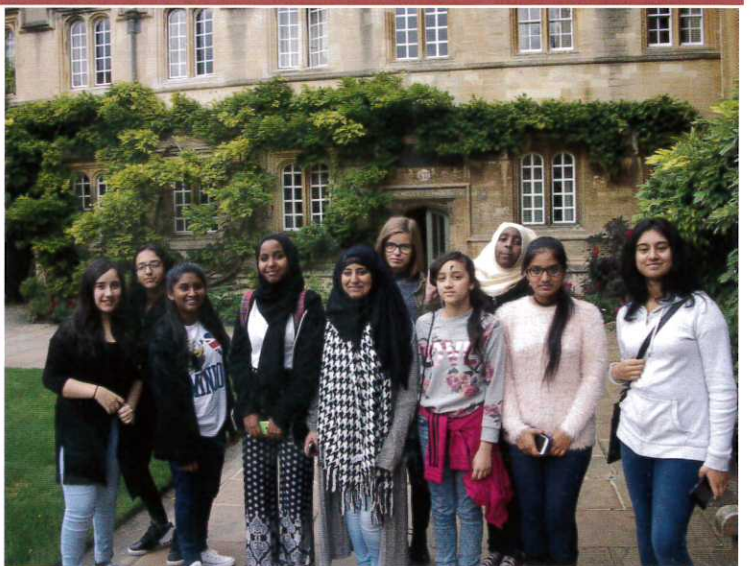
The placements are arranged as part of DWHS's collaboration with the Access project, an organisation that helps to bridge the gap between Sixth Form and work by matching students' professional interests and skills to the needs of a host of leading employers.

## Lion-hearted pitch

The winning team from last year's Lionheart Challenge competed in the regional final at Hackney Town Hall in October. The Year 11 students – Manpreet Sian, Davin Osman, Ehsan Selman, Hussein Hussein, Gurkrian Shokar, Anika Sharma, Arwa Shahbaz, Warsame Ali and Disha Rana – produced a product and marketing and finance plan to pitch to a panel of judges. They were assessed on their teamwork and the quality of their presentation.



## Maths residential adds up



Fifteen Year 9 students had the chance to test their mathematical skills against the impressive backdrop of Oxford University in October. The group enjoyed a residential weekend that saw them tackling a series of activities and challenges, working with shapes and building towers.

## Checking literacy



Parents can find out more about their child's literacy by clicking on the 'Literacy at DWHS' tab under the 'Curriculum' menu heading on the school website indicated in the image above.

The tab also provides access to useful information including the DWHS Literacy Marking Codes and the My Literacy booklet, which students use during term time.

The 'Litbox' will be uploaded soon. It will feature useful presentations and resources that students can use to improve their literacy skills.



## Art project KICK start



Student Nargis Hossain, displaying her work at the end-of-project exhibition

Forty students from Years 8 to 13 enjoyed the opportunity of working with professional portrait artist Jean Pretorius this term.

The *Colour our Space* project saw participants learning how artists understand and use colour in their work and studying the plants growing in the Dormers Wells Garden. Students used their new-found understanding to produce a series of artworks based on what they had observed.

The project culminated in an exhibition of students' work in the school's Long Gallery. *Colour our Space* was funded by the KICK (Kickstart Initiative for Community Kids) charity, whose Chief Executive is Dormers Wells alumnus Kanwardeep Ahluwalia.

## Children in Need



Dormers Wells High School students raised more than £1,100 for the 2015 Children in Need appeal. Year 7 students alone raised more than £100 of the total.

The money was raised with activities including a competition to guess the number of jelly beans in a jar, a teacher 'mash-up' in which students were challenged to guess the identities of several teachers whose images had been merged together, and a fayre offering activities. The fayre also included a sale of home-produced foods including cakes, pakoras and samosas. Students and staff also made donations in exchange for henna hand tattoos and wearing trainers to school.

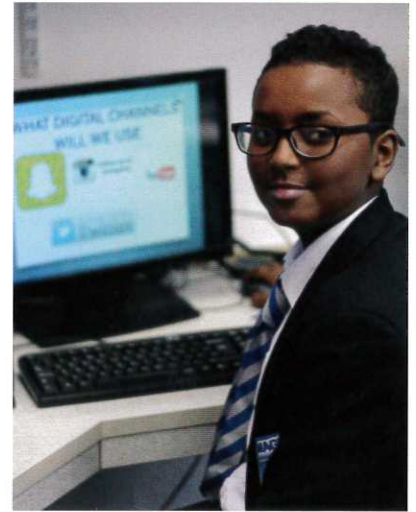
## DWHS Digital Day

Year 9 Computing students enjoyed a DWHS-hosted Digital Day in November.

Industry professionals participated in the event, sharing their expertise on the development of the digital industries and offering advice on the careers available.

Working as teams, the students took on three challenges developing prototype website and mobile phone apps for Sony Music and Vodafone.

A hotly-contested Dragon's Den style pitch saw the different teams competing against one another for their proposals to go forward to a national competition. Congratulations go to Jay Samra, Fatima



Qureishi, Ahmed Mohammed and Eryk Czarnota, whose ideas for the My Vodafone app triumphed.

## Technical tests for Year 10 girls



Six Year 10 girls took on a day of technical challenges at a Tata Consultancy services-hosted event in early November.

Joining students from five other schools, the girls undertook a series of challenges including working with the SAM Labs dynamic programming tool to create mini-robots, responding to a client brief to develop and pitch a digital solution for the Childnet charity, and creating an effective production line to manufacture swirly birds. The day also afforded the girls the opportunity to quiz a panel of female role models working in science and technology about careers opportunities available to them.

TCS Head of Human Resources Nupur Mallick, who has herself changed career paths during her working life, praised the students' enthusiasm and willingness to learn new skills.

Her enthusiasm was reciprocated by the Dormers Wells participants, who valued the event for improving their teamwork and communication skills, developing their scientific knowledge, and emphasising the opportunities available to females working in technical fields. The day was organised as part of DWHS's collaboration with MyKindaFuture, a social business that connects young people with the world of work.



# Getting a taste for University life

Students have been enjoying a taste of life at some of Britain's leading higher education institutions this half-term.

Groups of both Year 11 and 12 students have enjoyed the opportunity to visit Cambridge University's Jesus College. The Year 11s' residential trip in September included workshops on University life led by undergraduates, advice on making applications from Admissions Tutors, and taster lectures. Attendees learnt about both practical aspects of University life, including the courses available, fees and extra-curricular activities, and also took away the message that they must aim high if they are to win the places they hope for.

Following them two months later was a

group of Year 12 students. They enjoyed presentations on how to make a competitive application and tours of three of the University's historic colleges: Jesus, Queen's and Selwyn.

One of London's premier higher education institutions, Imperial College, hosted a group of Year 9 students in November. The students enjoyed a lecture by Dr Roberto Trotto on 'The Dark Mysteries of the Universe' and learnt more about life as a professional scientist. The attendees report heightened interest in fields including bio-engineering and the study of dark matter.

In addition to these group visits, a number of individual students have won places on particular institutions' access programmes.

Two Year 10 students—Asiya Siddiq and Shahzadi Komal—have been selected for Imperial College's STEM Potential programme, Year 12 Paige Harris has secured a place on King's College, London's K+ programme for Languages and Literature, and Fahmida Khan has been selected as a Reading Scholar.



## House system introduced

A new House System has been introduced at Dormers Wells. All students now belong to one of six houses, each associated with a colour. The six houses are Invictus,

Magnus, Laurus, Altius, Citius and Fortius.

Students will compete across a range of activities and disciplines throughout the year, earning points that will determine which House is crowned inaugural champions at the end of the year. One of the first house-based activities has been a Christmas Cake making competition, in which Fortius triumphed with the beautifully decorated example pictured. Congratulations go to teacher baker Chris Boole and student bakers Hamna Choudhary, Rhianne Wizard, Imaan Khan and Ben Grummitt.



## Be the best you can be!

The launch of the Mayor's Fund for London's *Be The Best you Can Be* project this term has seen both an inspiring visit to Dormers Wells by BMX Champion Mike Mullen and a visit for a lucky group of students to City Hall.

Mike addressed an assembly of the entire Year 7, before taking to his bike to demonstrate his considerable skills on two wheels.

Three students, Shamia Ahmed, Ans Arab and Pragnun Panthri, enjoyed a special visit to City Hall, where they heard from Olympic and Paralympic athletes and had the opportunity to enjoy the amazing view from the ninth floor balcony.



## In Brief



A residential trip to Newland Park Activity Centre in Buckinghamshire this term saw Year 7 students enjoying activities including abseiling (above), archery and climbing. Meanwhile, Year 8 student Abdi Mohamed (right) has earned a place in Reading Football Club's Academy Development Under 12s squad. He is training with the Championship club while continuing his schooling.



## Diary Dates

**Monday 4th January:** Back to school

**Thursday 4th February:** Year 8 Parents' Evening

**Week Commencing 8th February:** Year 9 and 10 Progress Checks sent home

**Thursday 11th February:** Spanish trip departs

**Friday 12th February:** School breaks up for half-term (school finishes at normal time)