

# Dormers Diary

## From the Head...

As you will realise reading this edition of *Dormers Diary*, it has been a busy half-term. The year began fresh from the OFSTED inspection we received in the final week of the Autumn term. We have now received the report and, as you will read below, have been given very positive feedback. I am delighted that the hard work of students, staff, parents and governors has been recognised in this way. It is obvious to everyone in the school community that we are thriving, but this commendation is an important endorsement of our efforts. Word of our success is spreading beyond the UK and we welcomed Christopher Short, the Headteacher of the British School in Hanoi, Vietnam, on an observational visit in January. Being seen as an exemplar from which others can learn is a huge compliment to us all. This half-term has also seen us welcoming visitors from the local authority, Councillor Binda Rai and Director of Education Judith Finlay. I was particularly proud to receive, following their visit, an email complimenting the Headteacher's ambassadors that conducted them on their tour of the school.



Róisín Walsh  
Headteacher

This commendation came as no surprise, but was gratifying nonetheless. February is, of course, a time when we look forward to the renewal and growth of Spring. For students this means preparing for Summer exams and deciding where they want their next steps to take them. Seeing the Year 11s embracing the opportunity of our A Level Taster day in January, looking and acting like the young professionals they will shortly become, chimed with the optimism and hope of the changing seasons and fills me with confidence that we will be welcoming another excellent cohort into our flourishing Sixth Form in September.

Another cause for optimism is the incredible start the school made in January to its career as a rugby union playing institution. I am an unashamed fan of the game, and it was with particular relish that I received the news of a very impressive debut performance. Well done to the team.

I wish you all an enjoyable half-term.

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## Glowing OFSTED review

Dormers Wells has received a very positive report following its OFSTED inspection at the end of December 2015.

The report notes the clear vision that the leadership team has for the school, the high expectations of both students and staff, and the culture of high aspirations that has been nurtured. Areas for improvement raised when the school was last inspected in May 2012 have been successfully addressed, it adds.

The academic achievement of students featured prominently in the inspectors' remarks, with above-average progress in a range of subjects drawing praise, and the above-national-average achievement of boys in many subjects being noted. Evidence that the recruitment of new staff is boosting attainment in subject areas where students had been doing less well is also welcomed.

The report also highlights Dormers Wells' effective strategies to help children feel safe, citing the information that is provided to them and the opportunities they are afforded to discuss issues such as bullying and radicalisation that may be of concern. Importantly, students know who they should talk to if they have concerns and have confidence that issues will be addressed, it adds.



Headteacher Ms Walsh, Deputies Mr Fenlon and Mr Cohen, and student leaders Mohammed, Khamil, Paige, Fonteni and Jasleen.

The inspectors reserved special praise for the contribution of Sixth Formers, noting their enthusiasm for mentoring younger students and their smart dress, diligence and ambition. Inspectors also found grounds for optimism in their evaluation of the governance of the school, noting governors' knowledge of the way the school works and their vision for further improvement.

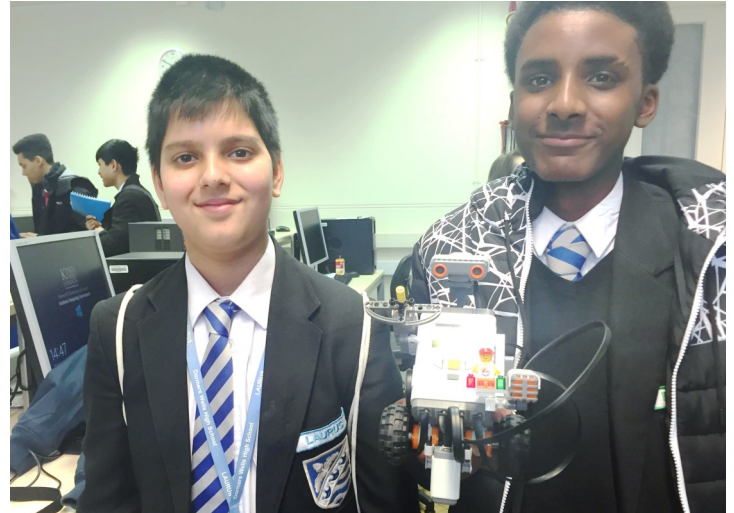
## Chess victory for Laurus

Pinaki Saha of 11HA (right) emerged as the champion of the inaugural house-based chess competition in January, taking the title for his house, Laurus. The competition saw students from across the school play more than 70 games. Pinaki won a closely-contested final against Year 8 student Akul Sangha, who was representing Altius house. Speaking afterwards Pinaki said: "it was a real challenge to win because Akul is a really good player. My parents were very proud of me". A brother-versus-brother final was narrowly avoided when Pinaki's brother, Year 7 student Prianker, was defeated in his semi-final game. Pinaki has played since he was eight years old and is self-taught.



## Scientists' London final

Year 9 students Rajan Bassi and Luqman Abdullah competed in the Southern Science and Technology Final at King's College London in January. They were challenged to build a programmable robot (which they are pictured holding below) and then program it to perform some set tasks. Despite performing well, the pair were unlucky not to be placed in the top three of the competition. They qualified for the event as part of the overall winning team at the West London Gifted and Talented Science and Technology Day last year.



## London handball title bid



*The Team: Mohamed Tanjin, Kayci Bernard, Labibur Ratul, Harmanjot Singh, Habibur Musthafa, Mohamed Sharif Ali, Abdi Mohamed, Hanad Ahmed, Azlan Ahmad, and Nivethan Nithiyakumar.*

Year 8 handball players are one step closer to competing in the London Youth Games.

The team won 22-7 against Hillingdon on 18th January, with Kayci Bernard earning the man of the match accolade for his performance in goal.

They will now play in the final qualifying round of the competition, in which they will take on the winners of the tie between the finalists from the London boroughs of Richmond and Hammersmith and Fulham. Winning that game would earn them a place at the London Youth Games.

The team qualified to represent Ealing by triumphing in the borough-wide tournament last year.

Fifteen Year 10 Triple Science students, meanwhile, attended the *Science Live!* event at the Dominion Theatre. They heard presentations from scientists including Professor Robert Winston and Professor Alice Roberts, both well known for their TV work. The group also enjoyed a session with the chief examiner, who shared exam tips. Adnan Shinwari of 10MY said "It was a great experience. I would recommend everyone who is interested in Science to go."

## Historic rugby union win

Dormers Wells made a victorious start to its fixtures as a complete rugby union-playing school this half-term.

The game against Cardinal Wiseman School saw the team run out as 45-5 winners. Player of the Match was Mona Labban, who demonstrated a great deal of bravery and was the best tackler on the pitch. Habibur Musthafa and Shams Mandozi scored three tries each, Mohamed Tanjin scored two and Mohammed Sharif Ali got one. The team did remarkably well as many of them had never even played rugby until a few months before the game.

The return fixture against Cardinal Wiseman was due to be played as Dormers Diary went to press.





## A Level Taster Day



Year 11 students with sufficiently-good predicted grades to suggest they are capable of A Level study were given the opportunity to see what life in the Sixth form is like in January. The students enjoyed sample A Level lessons and their demands to help them make course choices and experienced the independence, freedom and self-responsibility that come with being an A Level scholar.

A taster day for those intending to study BTEC qualifications is being held in February. BTECs also lead to University study, and many former DWHS students have progressed to higher education via this route.

## Sculpture's legacy



Current Year 12s involved in 2012: Muhamed Umer, Wajeehulla Mahmood, Rome Cameron, Sumeet Sharma, Julia Keck and Fahmida Raka Khan, with Ms Walsh, Mr Layden and Raj.

Early February saw a return visit to Dormers Wells by Raj Dagstani, the artist who led the project to create the *Stars Like Dust* sculpture that greets visitors to the school. Raj worked with approximately 100 students to create the work back in 2012. The project challenged them to create a vision for a sculptural piece based on the school motto 'Opening the doors to success'. With many of those who participated now in Years 12 and 13, Raj's visit prompted reflection on the work. Fahmida Raka Khan, in Year 8 when she took part, said: "It was great to work in groups to come up with new and unique ideas. Raj really helped us improve our work." The project's impact was striking also to the artist. "Students are still proud." he said. "The project made them realise they could achieve things they would not have thought possible."

## Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Fourteen Year 11 students were presented with their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards in a ceremony at Greenford Town Hall on Thursday 28th January. One of the recipients, Ameerah Nehor, was chosen to perform at the event, which was attended by more than 300 people.

To achieve their award the students have completed independent volunteering and a skills project over three and six months respectively. The end of the course saw the students travel to Swanage in Dorset to complete an expedition that involved them carrying their tents and lifesaving equipment on two six-hour treks.



## Holocaust assemblies

Sixth Form students Simran Rai and Avnish Grewal have hosted a series of assemblies for fellow students to share their experiences of visiting the Auschwitz 1 and Birkenau Nazi concentration camps in Poland.

The assemblies saw them contemplating what humanity is and how it can prevail in the worst of situations, and relating the stories of the individuals and events they had learnt about during their trip to Poland. As well as visiting the camps and viewing the exhibits there, Simran and Avnish also had the opportunity to visit the rebuilt Jewish cemetery in the nearby town and joined a candlelit vigil being led by a Jewish rabbi.

The trip was preceded and followed by seminars where they discussed their expectations and reflected upon their experiences of the visit. As part of the project, the two have become ambassadors for the Holocaust Educational Trust.



The famous entrance gate at Auschwitz, photographed by Simran during the visit.



## Netballers take silver



Year 8 netballers (above) are celebrating after winning silver medals for their league campaign. They concluded their fixtures with a 7-2 victory against William Perkin School at the end of January. The girls lost only one fixture, by a single point to Drayton Manor, during the season. Congratulations go to Abbie, Achint, Carina, Hannan, Louisa, Madihah, Riymah and Shannon.

The senior and junior boys' basketball teams also enjoyed the taste of victory in January, with the senior side securing a 27-28 victory over Elthorne Park and the juniors recording an emphatic 35-1 win over Greenford.

## House Proud

The spirit of competition between the school's six new houses has been much in evidence this half-term, with students taking on intra-house quiz challenges to determine who will represent their house in next half-term's inter-house event. Competitors faced rounds including 'name that song', sports and brain teasers.

Houses have also competed in a competitive Bake Sale contest that culminated in an event in the school's Long Room on Friday 29th January. The event raised a total of £308.84, with Altius house being crowned champion bakers by raising £69.25. More than 300 cakes were on sale.



*Fortius House raised £50.83 to finish fourth in the Bake Sale contest. These cakes were among the delicious treats they prepared.*

## University calling



Year 11 students whose hard work and academic ability are likely to put them in a position to apply for top University courses were welcomed to the *My Future, My University* event in January. It provided advice and information about the opportunities and support available to them. It also featured former students now undertaking degree-level study sharing their experiences. Attendees said the event provided far more information and insight than they were expecting, describing it as "very informative and educational" and "extremely helpful". Every attendee gave the event a score of either four or five out of five.

Year 10 students, meanwhile, have been enjoying visits to Jesus College, Cambridge, and St John's College, Oxford. Attendees reported that the visits had both provided further motivation to succeed in their examinations and practical insights that will enable them to make more effective applications for University places.

## Year 10s' coaching honour

Two Year 10 students, Harshwarya Kaur and Hassan Tariq, have been selected for a group of just 25 young people from West London to participate in the Youth Sports Trust's Young Coaches Academy.

The course will develop their coaching and organisational skills and leads to a nationally-recognised qualification.

Both are committed sportspeople. Harshwarya has served as captain of both the netball and rounders teams and has also represented the school in athletics. Hassan has captained the cricket team every year, guiding them to

success at borough level and beyond. He is also a member of the football team and has also represented the school in athletics. Both of them intend to enjoy lifelong participation in sport.



## Diary Dates

**Monday 22nd February:** Back to school after half-term holiday

**Wednesday 24th February:** Year 8 and 9 Options Fair

**Thursday 3rd March:** Year 7 Parents' Evening and reports

**Thursday 10th March:** Year 11 Parents' Evening and reports

**W/C Monday 14th March:** Year 12 and 13 Progress Reports published

**Thursday 24th March:** School breaks up for Easter Holiday