



*"We chose Dorcan because of the great range of experiences which it could offer our child and it has lived up to our expectations."*  
(Parent)



# A Warm Welcome



**Sherryl Bareham**  
Headteacher

**At The Dorcan Academy our vision is to be an outstanding school of first choice at the heart of our local community. We aim to provide exciting learning opportunities within a vibrant, creative and inclusive environment, where students can discover their strengths, talents and interests and pursue them to the highest standards to become the best they can be. We have high expectations of all our students and challenge them on a daily basis to 'Aspire to Greatness'.**

As well as attaining the highest academic standards possible, we also understand the importance of developing creatively, socially, emotionally and spiritually. Ultimately, we want our students to stand out as model citizens of whom society

can be proud, valuing justice, honesty and integrity and with a strong sense of responsibility, independence and respect for all people.

We know that in order to achieve our vision a strong partnership between home and school is vital. As parents you have a key role in our young people's progress and we rely on and value your support and active involvement as we work together to give them the best opportunities possible. Choosing the right school for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. We hope that this prospectus will give you an insight into the many aspects of life at The Dorcan Academy and we warmly invite you to visit our school to see us in action.

Mrs Sherryl Bareham

*"This may seem over the top but I really am so pleased with the education that my daughter is getting and I just want you all to know I think you are fantastic!!!"*  
(Parent)

*"I am so pleased we chose Dorcan. Your staff have welcomed my daughter in and offered extra help where needed, but also challenged her to strive for the best."*  
(Parent)



# Exceptional achievement for **every** student

At The Dorcan Academy we believe that every young person, whatever their background has the potential to succeed and achieve 'greatness' through working hard and doing their best. We offer a rich, diverse and challenging curriculum which includes academic, creative, technological and sporting opportunities, designed to fully prepare students for the world, for work and for their wellbeing.

Our pathway system ensures that every student follows a curriculum that meets

their individual needs and is right for them, maximising success for all. At The Dorcan Academy students with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. (Ofsted).

We understand that achievement comes in many forms and want our students to achieve more than a set of excellent examination results. Extra-curricular provision is a strength of the academy and is extensive, ranging from a variety of 'in-house' clubs and activities to numerous

residential trips abroad and the opportunity to take part in the highly acclaimed Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

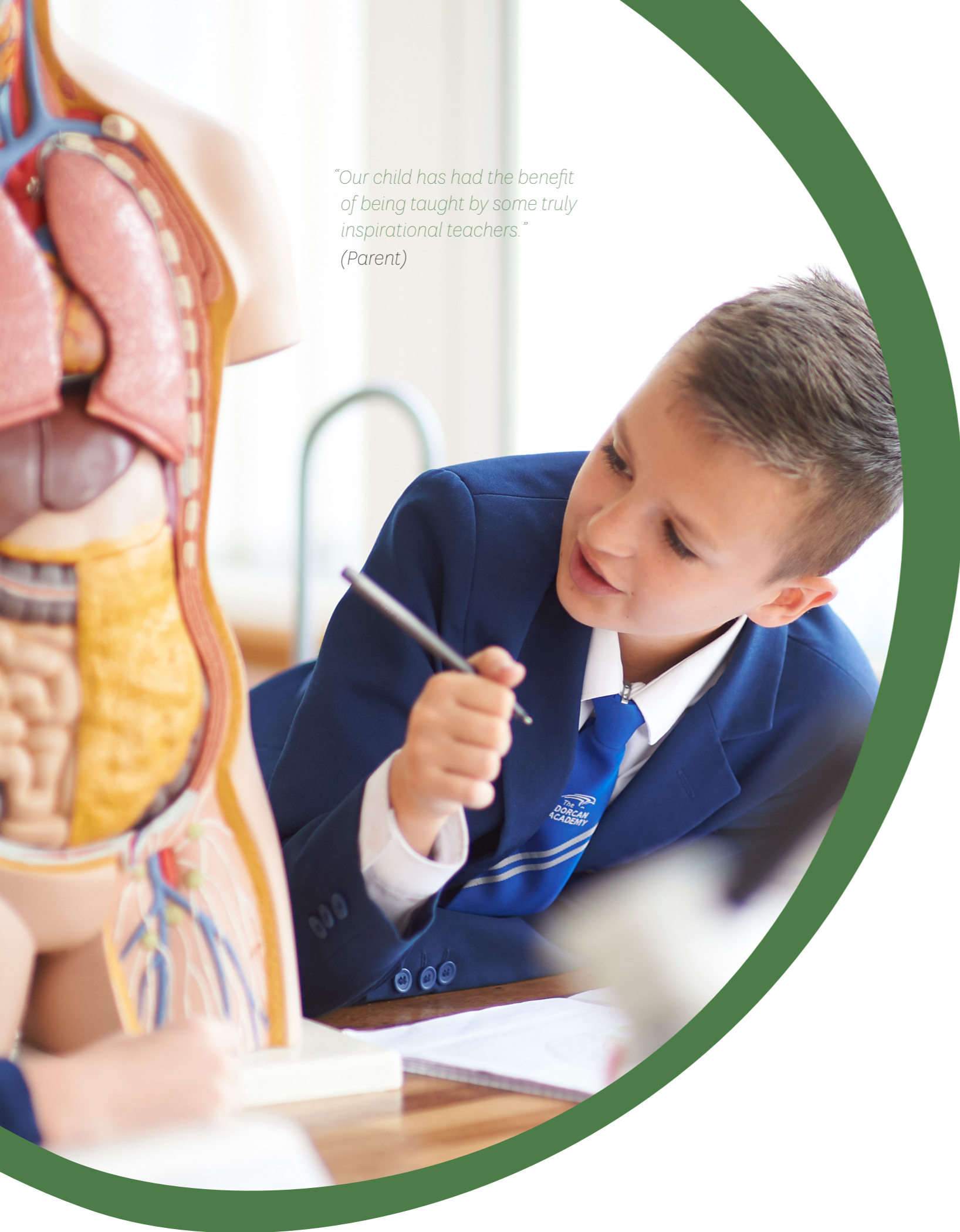
We place a strong emphasis on providing additional literacy and numeracy support for students who need it. By thinking carefully about the needs of each student we create the maximum opportunity for the success of all. At The Dorcan Academy students with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. (Ofsted)

*"In just 18 months my son has represented the school in both academic and sporting competitions. He has also joined the steel band, played in concerts and begun to learn a new instrument, participated in a range of after school clubs, attended the year 7 camp and been on a residential visit to France."*

*(Parent)*

*"Students taking Duke of Edinburgh 'stand out from the crowd'."*  
*(Local Business Person)*





*"Our child has had the benefit of being taught by some truly inspirational teachers."  
(Parent)*

*"Staff promote a positive climate for learning and manage students with assurance; their good subject understanding and love of their subject frequently inspires confidence in students."  
(Ofsted)*

*"It's great to see the standards rise within the school and I'm proud to be part of the academy"  
(Teacher)*



## High quality teaching that **inspires** and **engages** minds

**We are committed to recruiting and retaining the very best teachers and involve students in the selection process for all new staff.**

The high quality of teaching at the academy means that students not only make good progress in their lessons but also enjoy their learning. Teachers use the most effective techniques and resources, based on research, to challenge all students to 'take risks' in their learning and support them to improve. We believe our students are capable of excellence and ensure that they access the best knowledge and curriculum opportunities.

We offer a range of curriculum pathways to ensure that all our students are stretched and challenged, including an Extended Curriculum for our most able and a bespoke Vocational curriculum for those who require additional support in literacy and numeracy and a less academic approach.

We are fortunate to have exceptional accommodation at the school, with extensive sports facilities, specialist laboratories and workshops as well as the latest technologies, to enable students to have every opportunity to succeed.



# An **inclusive** school where everyone is **valued,** **nurtured** and cared for in an **extraordinary** way

**At the Dorcan Academy we place great emphasis on our pastoral care and through our House system, foster a strong sense of belonging, just as in a family.**

The role of the form tutor is vital; to know all the students in their care personally, track their progress and ensure that they are fully supported and happy in school so that they can flourish. Each student and tutor group belongs to a House, led by a Head of House who has overall responsibility

for the progress, personal development and welfare of their students. The pastoral system ensures that each child is valued within our school community for **who** they are, and that they are known and cared for on a daily basis.

*"We were very impressed that his tutor contacted us directly to introduce himself early on, and that communication with him has been so simple."*  
(Parent)

*"I've been so impressed with the communication and warm, caring attitudes of the staff."* (Parent)

*"The quality of pastoral care and advice at the school is a great strength."*  
(Ofsted)



"Dorcan has really helped to improve my child's confidence."  
(Parent)



## Students stand out as **model citizens**, aspiring to **make a difference** to the lives of others

### ACADEMY VALUES

Be Kind, Show Respect, Do your Best.

### ETHOS

Our Ethos is based on our Core Principles which guide our actions on a daily basis.

Belonging  
Purpose  
Aspiration  
Perseverance  
Achievement

We seek to develop the following character virtues in all of our students:

Honesty  
Integrity  
Compassion  
Courage  
Generosity  
Gratitude  
Personal Responsibility  
Resilience  
Self-Discipline

We believe in the importance of high standards of uniform, expect students to take pride in themselves and the environment and to model exemplary behaviour and character.

The school's culture is aspirational, based on very high standards of work and behaviour, with students always encouraged to do their very best and to consider how the things they do affect others. We believe in the importance of high standards of uniform, expect students to take pride in themselves and the environment and to model exemplary behaviour. There are clear expectations for students which are regularly revisited and we celebrate and reward students who consistently demonstrate high levels of positive behaviour and show outstanding achievement.

There are many opportunities for students to develop confidence and skills to equip them for life after school, by becoming prefects, House ambassadors, Academy

council representatives, mentors or taking part in our many community or business projects. Students receive recognition and accreditation through our in-house leadership award programme. At The Dorcan Academy, *who you are* is as important as *what you achieve*.

*"Students in this academy are courteous and welcoming. Students from all backgrounds get along notably well together and have positive, appreciative relationships with staff."*  
(Ofsted)



*"My child came home from the transition days saying, 'I want to go to that school.'" (Parent)*

*"Our son aspires to attend a leading university as a result of the encouragement and guidance he has been given." (Parent)*

# Preparing for the Future

At The Dorcan Academy there is an extensive programme of careers advice and guidance on offer throughout both Key Stages. In Year 10 students undertake real life work experience as well as interview preparation and practice with local business partners. Some students have even been offered jobs as a result! There are opportunities to visit universities and higher education institutions and 1:1 careers interviews to support students to make informed choices about their future careers and aspirations.

A quote from a local employer following our Mock interview day: 'Dorcan has some highly aspirational students; even those with lower predicted grades knew what they wanted to do and how to achieve this'.

*"The superb transition arrangements between Dorcan and our son's feeder primary ensured that his progression to secondary school was incredibly smooth." (Parent)*



## Working together in partnership

**The Dorcan Academy is committed to serving its local community and places great importance on partnerships with parents, our local primary schools and local businesses.**

Working closely with our partner primary schools is a long tradition at Dorcan and ensures a smooth transition to secondary school. We continue to work together as the Dorcan Learning Cluster of schools, to develop even better continuity of teaching and learning between the primary and secondary phases, ensuring all our children make the progress they should.

Good communication with parents is essential for the ongoing support of individual students. Tutors provide the main point of contact through the Link Books and via e-mail. We know that the home-school link is vital if students are to make the most of the opportunities offered, enabling them to grow into successful young people ready to become confident citizens and contribute to society in the future. The Academy embraces partnerships with other schools both locally and nationally in order to share best practice and ensure that we are at the cutting edge of new reforms.



# The details

**The Dorcan Academy is an 11-16 learning community that has thrived since becoming Swindon's first designated specialist Technology College in 1999. We became an Academy in 2011 in order to provide even better opportunities for our young people. Over the years we have built up an extensive range of specialist facilities to give our students a wide range of experiences.**



## THE ACADEMY CURRICULUM

The knowledge rich curriculum at The Dorcan Academy is designed to motivate, enthuse and excite students, as well as to prepare them fully for the world, for work and for their wellbeing. We believe that young people achieve their best when they are confident and their strengths are recognised. So we place students in teaching groups where their learning will be supported and try to keep group sizes low. Students are placed in curriculum pathways designed to meet their particular learning needs, including an extended curriculum pathway to provide high levels of stretch and challenge for our most able children, and tailored support and specialist tuition for children with particular literacy or numeracy needs. Within these pathways students either work in sets or as mixed ability groups depending on the subject.

## KS3

In the first two years, students study English Language and Literature, Maths and Science (a combination of Physics, Chemistry and Biology). This, along with PE, Health and Wellbeing, Careers and Skills for Life is our 'Core' curriculum and will be followed all the way through school. Our students also have a balanced curriculum of Design Technology, Global Learning (Geography, History and RE), Modern Languages, Art, Drama, Dance and Music. Currently, students are given the opportunity to choose some of their courses in Year 9 which enables them to personalise their learning by choosing subjects that interest them.

## KS4

The wide range of subjects and qualifications offered at KS4 helps our students to achieve excellent results and progress on to further and higher education or apprenticeships. Our students continue to study the "Core" subjects in Years 10 and 11. Additionally, we offer a wide range of subjects and different types of qualification. Options include French, Spanish, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Sociology, Psychology, Product design, Engineering, Food Technology, Business Studies, Physical Education, Creative and Media, Fine Art, Photography, Dance, Music, Drama and Performing Arts.



# The details



## HOME LEARNING

Home Learning is designed to prepare students for formal examinations and involves learning key content from the curriculum. Students are given 'knowledge organisers' to study and learn in every subject, according to a Home Learning timetable which is published on the academy website. All Home Learning and additional study tasks are published on 'Show My Homework' as well as written in the student's link book, which is signed weekly by the form tutor and countersigned by parents.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

As far as we are concerned, the sky is the limit for every student. We are passionately committed to challenging everyone in the school community, staff included, to reach his or her potential and to improve on our best.

## EDUCATION TAILORED TO YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS

We aim for every child to do their very best and achieve more than they thought possible. So our teaching staff are highly trained in giving individual attention to students and have high expectations. Many students who say our targets look challenging find themselves going on to achieve or even exceed our expectations. This does not happen by accident. We have a dedicated team of support staff who will give small group and one to one teaching to students across the age and ability range. This can mean helping students to push on to a Grade 9 rather than an 8 as well as ensuring strong support for those with learning difficulties.

## CAREERS ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Our careers advice and guidance is very strong. All our students who left us last year have college places or are in employment or training. Virtually all of our students choose to continue in learning locally, either in tertiary or further education colleges or training. This number has risen steadily to 99%. The number of students not in education employment or training (NEET) has continued to fall and is now at 0%.

## STUDENT SUPPORT

We are a caring school, providing a wide range of support to meet individual needs to help students to focus on learning. To foster a sense of belonging we operate a House system. Houses are led by Heads of House who manage teams of tutors who have daily contact with students. In-school support is provided by a variety of means including coaching, mentoring and Counselling, plus support from a range of external agencies including health professionals.

## CHILD PROTECTION

The Dorcan Academy promotes an ethos where our students feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We want children at our school to feel able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor, if they are worried or concerned about something. We fully recognise the contribution this can make in protecting children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered students at our school. All staff and volunteers will, through induction and training, know how to recognise concerns about a child and know how to manage a disclosure made by a child. We will not make promises that we cannot keep to a child and we will not keep secrets. The full Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy can be viewed on the school website.

## ATTENDANCE

The importance of attendance cannot be over-emphasised. If a student has only 90% attendance over the course of their time at Dorcan it is equivalent to losing half a school year of their learning. As a parent you have a key role in ensuring that your children arrive at school every day, and through the work of tutors, Heads of Houses and the Education Welfare Officer we aim to provide support to this end.

## ABSENCE REQUEST

This is done through an absence request form which your child's Heads of Houses keeps, or from Student Reception. Due to government guidelines, the school cannot authorise any holidays unless there are special circumstances. In cases of illness, please phone the school each day your child is ill, preferably before the start of school. The school is not allowed to presume illness due to a previous day's absence and we will require a phone call to confirm your child is being kept at home. Upon receipt of your phone message, your child's attendance is automatically changed centrally. In all cases of absence, a note should be provided, preferably via the Link Book, to explain the absence which you, as parent or carer, should sign.

## PUPIL PREMIUM

The 'Pupil Premium', along with all forms of school funding, are carefully managed to enable us to offer personalised support and narrow gaps for disadvantaged groups of students. It is essential that we can be sure that the 'Pupil Premium' and all other types of school funding are having the intended effect of meeting the educational needs of every student. At The Dorcan Academy we have a culture of continuous review and improvement. The impact of Pupil Premium money is reported annually on the school's website.

## UNIFORM

We are a uniform school and the uniform policy is consistently applied in our drive to raise standards. The uniform should give students a real sense of identity, be worn with pride and make students feel part of the school community. The uniform is published on the Academy website.

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS

We look to reinforce the positive through a system of rewards based on the collection of House points for good work, effort and behaviour. The reward points are awarded electronically and add up to certificates and other special prizes, including reward trips throughout the year.

## HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The Dorcan Academy has a clear behaviour for learning policy known as 'Ready to Learn'. We expect the highest standards of work and behaviour from students in this community based on everyone doing their best, common sense, courtesy and consideration for others; enabling our focus to be on learning. Our rules are simple: Be kind, Show Respect and Do your Best. We actively teach character virtues and promote positive attitudes amongst students. We actively promote positive attitudes amongst students and absolutely reject any behaviour by individuals or groups which might cause distress or hurt to others. Our expectations of all members of the school community are outlined in the Behaviour Policy and the Anti-Bullying Code, which can be found on the school's website.

# The details

## COMMUNICATIONS

Regular online information bulletins and termly newsletters give you school news and detailed information about the activities in departments and in Houses. These are available in electronic form on our school web site [www.dorcan.co.uk](http://www.dorcan.co.uk) and paper copies are available on request. We also use Twitter and Facebook to keep parents and students up to date with school information.

The Link Book is a personal organiser designed to give all students the school information they need and plan their home learning. It also enables easy communication between home and school. We ask that parents sign the Link Book weekly. We acknowledge that good communications between home and school are essential and try to use a range of methods to keep in contact including: Link Book, e-mail, telephone, letter, text, and website.

## PARENT PARTNERS

As a parent you are automatically invited to parent events. There are regular events throughout the year which have been developed to enable parents to meet school staff informally. This gives parents an opportunity to discuss a range of school related issues.

At these events parents can expect to:

- Receive information about the school and its activities
- Hear more about what partnerships with parents mean at Dorcan
- Be invited to be involved in ways and times that suit you
- Identify issues that need to be addressed
- Work in partnership with staff
- Enjoy taking part in the life of the school in whatever way you can

## THE SCHOOL DAY

8:30	Tutor Time
8:50	Lesson 1
9:50	Lesson 2
10:50	Break
11:10	Lesson 3
12:10	Lesson 4
1:10	Lunch
1:40	DEAR (Drop everything and read) + bitesize interventions
2:00	Lesson 5
3:00	Extra-Curricular Activities and Revision Programme

## LUNCHTIME

School meals are run by Aspens Catering services. There are a variety of meal options, including a range of hot and cold food. We operate a cashless catering system and offer promotions and discounts for payment via School Comms. If your child is eligible for free school meals please make sure that you have contacted the education department at the council and arrange this well before the start of term.



