

May 2022

## Headlines

Dear Parent/Carer

### Good News

We are delighted that we have launched our very first PTFA (Parents, Teachers, Friends Association) at the Dorcan Academy thanks to the enthusiasm and persistence of our fantastic Transition Lead, Ms Lee. The first meeting was held on 17 May where three parents were voted in as the Chair (Nicky Kennedy), the Secretary (Paul O’Nion) and the Treasurer (Claire Rousell). All parents are invited to attend future meetings and we look forward to hearing about upcoming events.

One of the first events will be the Covingham Jumble Trail to be held on Sunday 12 June 2022 1-3pm, where our newly formed PTFA will, as part of the official route, be selling pre-loved uniform at the front of the school at much reduced prices. If you have any pre-loved uniform which is still in good condition, we would love to be able to take it off your hands and re-use it. Please bring it into reception where we will gratefully receive.

### Student success

This term two Year 7 students, Jacob Sanders and Arabella Lancaster, had the chance to participate along with students from other secondary schools in Swindon in a fabulous art workshop hosted by the award-winning illustrator Steve Antony. Those that attended were the winners of the Swindon Youth Festival of Literature illustration competition which Steve judged, and this was the prize. It was an amazingly creative morning, and our students were very proud to represent Dorcan at this fabulous event.

### Maths success

This year we had more students than ever taking part in the UKMT Maths Challenge. The Junior Challenge (Years 7 and 8) saw six Year 7 students and fourteen Year 8 students achieving the Bronze award and two Year 7 students and four Year 8 students achieving the Silver award. Harvey Harper (Year 8) achieved the top score in the year group. In the Intermediate challenge (Years 9 and 10), 8 students achieved a Bronze, and 3 achieved Silver with Arlo Klenczon (Year 10) achieving the best result in school. All students who participated will be presented with a certificate to celebrate their effort and success. Well done to all those involved!

### English – Adopt an animal on Growth Mindset Day

On Growth Mindset Day, the English department ran a competition to adopt a wild animal to help protect declining habitats. A massive congratulations to the following Year 9 winners and runners up who crafted engaging, entertaining and persuasive letters and who successfully adopted the following:

#### Winners:

- Will Temple – Adopted an orangutan
- Tiger Lily Ohana – Adopted a penguin
- Sophie O’Nion – Adopted a panda

The three runners up received an animal book gifted from our librarian, Kate Murphy:

- George Cook
- Nicole Drabble
- Kaleb Reid

## **Year 11**

Year 11 exams are now in full swing and our students are conducting themselves in an exemplary way. The official Leaving assembly will be held on **Wednesday 29 June** at 2pm in the school hall. Students will not be required in school on this day until 1:45pm when they will arrive via main reception and make their way straight to the main hall. Uniform is not required but students should dress smartly for a formal occasion. Final prom invites will be coming out before May half term.

## **Reading at Key Stage 3 – a change to Home Learning**

At Dorcan each lesson starts with a 10 minute 'Do now' task which students complete independently. In English the 'Do now' task so far this year has been independent reading of the student's personal novel. Next term, we are going to introduce alternative 'Do now' tasks related to the content of each lesson, but we still need independent reading to continue. We are, therefore, introducing reading Home Learning.

We expect students to read for at least ten minutes every day. Students have been issued with bookmarks and these will be used as evidence for having completed their reading. Each time they read, students need to fill in a row on the bookmark, including the date and the number of the page they read up to. Approximately every two weeks students will quiz on the completed book during their library lesson, using the Accelerated Reader programme.

We hope this will be enjoyable Home Learning for students. However, there will be the normal sanctions for students who do not complete Home Learning. We look forward to your support in encouraging reading. Should you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Evans, Deputy Head of English ([devans@dorcan.co.uk](mailto:devans@dorcan.co.uk)).

## **Year 9 English:**

Year 9 students will be completing their Spoken Language GCSE next term. The GCSE consists of a presentation on a topic of choice, for three to five minutes. The student will be questioned about their topic by their peers afterwards. The presentations are filmed and sent to the exam body and students receive either a Pass, Merit, or Distinction on their GCSE Language certificate. Lessons will be planned to support students with writing and structuring their speech.

Please can parents also support by encouraging their children to rehearse their presentation at home, preferably in front of an audience, to help build their confidence.

## **Careers**

As part of our careers programme, we are looking to share success stories of former students to show our current cohort where life after Dorcan can take them. If you have a child or know a former student who left Dorcan in the last eight years and would be willing to share their story on a poster or in person, please ask them to contact Mr Brownlie at [abrownlie@dorcan.co.uk](mailto:abrownlie@dorcan.co.uk). We feel this is an important step to inspire and motivate students by increasing their awareness.

### **Road safety**

We have had a few concerns voiced recently from members of the public about our students travelling to and from schools on their bicycles. There have been near misses due to students not cycling carefully or following road safety rules; and some students are cycling on footpaths rather than on cycle paths or on the roads. Please could you reinforce the importance of cycling safely and showing respect to other road users and members of the public – we want all our students to stay safe on their journey to and from school.

### **Uniform**

Please make sure your child doesn't do anything over the holiday that contravenes our uniform policy and will mean that they are unable to attend lessons on their return; particularly false nails, piercings, unnatural hair colourings or extreme haircuts, tramlines or shaved or part shaved heads. Thank you.

### **Robert Buckland MP Launches Queen's Jubilee Portrait Competition**

South Swindon MP Robert Buckland is calling on children in South Swindon to take part in a Queen's Jubilee Portrait Competition. Robert is asking children to draw a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II to celebrate her 70th year reign. All of the entries received will be proudly displayed in a special Jubilee section on Robert's website.

Robert said: "I hope the children enjoy taking part in the competition as part of the Jubilee Celebrations here in Swindon. I am looking forward to receiving all of the entries."

The Queen's Jubilee Portrait Competition is open to all children in Robert's constituency of South Swindon and children can enter in the following age categories: Age 5 – 7 years; Age 7 – 11 years; Age 11 – 14 years; Age 14 – 16 years. All entries should include the child's name, age and a contact email address or telephone number.

Entries should be posted to:  
Robert Buckland MP  
Queen's Jubilee Portrait Competition  
29b Wood Street  
Old Town  
Swindon  
SN1 4AN

Winners for each category will be announced over the Jubilee Bank Holiday Weekend.

### **Staff Leavers**

At the end of this term we are very sad to be saying goodbye to our site manager, Steve Evans who is retiring, having worked at Dorcan for the past 10 years. He has been an asset to the school and always does everything with a smile on his face. We will miss you Steve and we wish you a long and happy retirement.

### **Rewards**

Congratulations to Eagle House who have maintained the lead closely followed by Osprey!! Currently the House totals are:

- Eagle: 73,633
- Osprey: 73,359

- Kingfisher: 68,647
- Falcon: 60,116

Don't forget to keep earning those house points.

We wish you all a happy half term break and look forward to seeing everyone again on Monday 6 June, which is A week.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Bareham  
Headteacher

