



The Dean

The Magazine of The Dean Academy



Issue 28

Easter 2022



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Update from the Headteacher



Term 4's newsletter is a bumper edition that celebrates the varied achievements of The Dean Academy community and showcases the range of fabulous skills and talents our students have. This term has thankfully been more recognisable and normal with trips, visits and fixtures returning in a meaningful way.

There have been many highlights this term but we were particularly proud to see the way our school community rallied together to find ways to fund raise for those most affected by the awful situation in Ukraine. In addition we've been continually inspired by our wonderful Year 11s who, despite a hugely disrupted KS4, have no time for excuses and have really worked hard to prepare for two sets of mock exams and to be as ready as possible to excel in their summer exams. Nearly there – one more push!!

Our first annual House Tug of War was a great way to mark the end of an incredibly successful but busy term and I know that all of our students and staff really loved coming together and competing for their house. Well done to Severn who were overall champions!

We want to say farewell to Mrs Willis who leaves us as teacher of Spanish at the end of this term. Mrs Willis has been at the school since September 2021 and has been incredibly dedicated and reliable in our MFL department.

Wishing you all a restful, relaxing and hopefully sunny Easter break. Term starts again on Monday 25th April and we look forward to seeing everyone then.

Richard Brand, Headteacher



Pulling together at The Dean Academy

School Terms and Holidays

Term 5

Begins: Monday 25th April (**students return**)

May-Day Holiday: Monday 2nd May

Ends: Friday 27th May (3.15pm)

Holiday: Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June

Term 6

Begins: Monday 6th June (**students return**)

Trust Inset Day: Friday 1st July

Ends: Thursday 21st July (12.30pm)

Holiday: Friday 22nd July - Wednesday 31st August



You can read the full Ofsted report by clicking here www.thedeanacademy.org/ofsted/

A Special Visit from MP Mark Harper

Forest MP Mark Harper paid a visit to The Dean Academy this term where he met with a group of students for a special tour of the school, he even participated in a Science class practical.

The students who led the tour were 'really impressed' by the local MP, Maya in Year 8 commented "Mr Harper seemed friendly and approachable and when we visited different parts of the school he asked us lots of questions and was interested in what we had to say." Mr Harper was also very supportive of Maddox in Year 11 who spoke to him about his fundraising efforts for World Autism Acceptance Week.

Mr Harper said "It was a great pleasure to have the opportunity to be taken on a tour of The Dean Academy by these students, they have shown me the great work that the school have done to receive its 'Good' Ofsted rating in its most recent report. I also enjoyed the opportunity to help out in one of the Science lessons as well as listen to the aspirations of the students at the school. I very much look forward to my next opportunity of visiting The Dean Academy."

Headteacher Richard Brand commented "It was great to see the confident and mature way our students talked about The Dean Academy whilst touring the school and visiting lessons with Mr Harper. It was clear listening to the students that they are proud of their school and it was so pleasing to hear them talk so positively about their experiences."



Raising Aspirations

Year 11s 'Embrace the Geek'



The Dean Academy have launched a new initiative this term to encourage Year 11 students to take ownership over their learning in preparation for the exams in the summer.

The initiative called, 'Embrace the Geek', was set up by Assistant Headteacher Hannah Rowlands, she explained "Each week students who have demonstrated to their teachers that they have been working hard are entered into a weekly prize draw where we have some fantastic prizes up for grabs. Students are entered if they have completed a great piece of homework, worked consistently hard in lessons and are attending the afterschool booster sessions. So far, there has been a really positive vibe with our Year 11 students about this."

Some of the great prizes on offer include Amazon gift vouchers, family cinema tickets, family takeaway vouchers and there is also a 'Brand's bonus' prize where the Headteacher will occasionally throw in a high stakes prize!



Brilliant Club Scholars Programme

Our Year 10 Brilliant Club members recently attended a special online graduation after successfully completing a university style assignment.

Over a number of weeks, the group have been working hard with Georgina, a trained PhD tutor on a project about wearable technology which was designed to help them explore higher education as part of their Scholars

Programme. Students then submitted an essay which was marked to university standard.

Mr Fessey, the Ambitions Lead at the school commented "This has been a great opportunity for our students to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in raising their aspirations. Fantastic work, well done everyone!"



Art, Design and Production

Easter Cakes

8X were set the challenge of producing a decorated cake on the theme of Easter. I think you'll agree the end result is stunning. Well done 8X!

9X, not to be outdone, also took part in the competition with equally brilliant results.

Five winners were chosen from each group. A difficult choice as they were all fantastic!

Mrs S Sayers and Mrs S Gittins-Jones



Year 7 Pencil Boats

7x have completed their Pencil Boat projects and they have all produced high quality products and fully functioning disguised pencil boxes.

The class independently used a variety of tools and equipment in the workshops and they have learnt an array of processes to fabricate the box. They safely and confidently marked out the pine using hand and machine saws to cut a lap joint and join to fabricate the box frame.

I am really pleased with the quality of work that they have produced. Throughout this project they have demonstrated great resilience and enthusiasm and have engaged with learning new processes whilst building on their Maths and carpentry skills. **Mr A Winstanley**



Year 11 Construction

Three Year 11 Construction students have now finished their extension carpentry project.

The tool box is quite a complicated piece of cabinetry work, having very strong compound angle dovetail joints in addition to housing and rebate joints. They have been finished with yacht varnish.

Their tool boxes will last and serve them for decades to come and may also be used as an exemplar to show off their skills to potential employers if an apprenticeship route is taken. Well done!

Mr A Winstanley



Erica's Work Experience

As part of her Asdan course, Erica in Year 11, is taking part in some work experience sessions at Waggly Tails in Lydney. Erica is recording her experiences in a journal:

January, 2022

"Today I went to visit Waggly Tails. I went there to meet the owner and to talk to her about doing some work experience there. I went with Ms McCormick, my Asdan teacher.

The owner's name is Donna Sutton. She was very kind, understanding and caring. She filled in the Health and Safety forms then she showed me around the parlour.

There were two dogs being groomed. One was called Chloe and she was very excited to see me.

In the back room were tables and a dog bath and all the shampoos and equipment needed.

There was a kennel area, an office and a staff room with a fridge and kettle and lockers, if I needed to use one.

There was a shop that had dog leads, toys and treats and other things.

I was nervous at the start, but after talking to the lady I felt she was very kind and helpful so I felt fine.

I am really looking forward to going back!

Erica, Year 11



Sowing Seeds in Asdan

Our Year 11 Asdan team have completed a challenge to plant seeds, with the intention of brightening up the school's Sensory Garden with some colourful flowers for the summer. They really enjoyed the lesson and are already seeing results in their individual seed trays. **Ms K McCormick**



Kieran's Amazing Journey

"I work on a farm in my spare time. I have been learning how to drive a tractor for about 2 years and last week I took my tractor test to be able to drive on the road. I have been waiting to do my tractor test for about 5 months, because I booked it as soon as I was 16. You must be 16 to be able to drive on the road in a tractor. It was getting closer to the time. I was getting excited as it got closer and the day I sat my tractor test was on February 1st 2022.

The day that I was sitting it I was very nervous. After I sat my test, I was speaking to the lady and it was very nerve racking and all of a sudden she said I'd passed and it was the best thing that happened!

I drove back to the farm with a smile on my face and my boss took a photo of me with my pass certificate in my hand with a great big smile on my face.

That day, my boss said to me 'would I like to go and feed some animals in the JCB?' and I said 'yes' and I had to go on the road. It was amazing!"

Kieran, Year 11



Computing

Keeping Safe Online

The Computing Department marked the annual Safer Internet Day with a special whole school assembly where students considered the positives and the negatives of the internet. This year, the theme of the event was 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online'.

From cyberbullying to social networking and digital identity, the Safer Internet Day co-ordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre aimed to raise awareness of online issues and current concerns to empower young people, their teachers and their families to make the best possible use of online technology.

Assistant Headteacher and Computing teacher Mrs Mehrotra-Hughes organised the school assembly and activities throughout the week, she explained "There are many benefits of the internet, it is an extremely useful tool that can bring people together and it can be a brilliant creative and sharing space, however, there are also negatives to online activity that can drive people apart."

According to the UK Safer Internet Centre 65% of people feel that people are 'meaner' to each other online than in real life, they may experience online bullying, harassment, or exclusion, Mrs Mehrotra-Hughes said "People behave differently online, they might think that the anonymity of it means that there will be no consequences to their behaviour, but that is not the case. Educating students about respecting others online is an important way to make their and others online experience a positive one."

Students were encouraged to be cautious and report any negative behaviour. To protect your digital identity students were told to be wary about sharing any personal information online and not to meet up with anyone offline. They should always report, block and tell a trusted adult, "It should be fun and games for everyone!"



**Safer
Internet
Day 2022** | **Tuesday
8 February**

CODE.org

C O
D E

Congratulations to Finley and Tyler for completing the code.org Pre-Reader Express Course in Computing.

The course helps students learn to create computer programmes, develop problem-solving skills, and work through fun challenges!

They have also just finished the Hour of Code course where they demonstrated an understanding of the basic concepts of Computer Science. Well done!



Primary Transition

Organised by Mr Edy, our Primary Liaison Lead, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils from Ellwood School have been regularly attending special Computing sessions at The Dean Academy with Mrs Mehrotra-Hughes.

The pupils have now completed their work where they used a variety of programs including Scratch and Audacity.



World Autism Acceptance Week

To mark the 60th anniversary of the National Autistic Society, staff and students have set themselves some special challenges throughout World Autism Acceptance week and together with Tesco in Lydney they have been raising money for the charity who provide support and guidance for autistic people and their families.

Mrs Turley, who works in the EPIC centre explained "We are extremely proud and privileged to be the only local secondary school to have provision in place for students who have Autism Spectrum Disorder, without the support of the National Autistic Society this type of provision may never have been developed. It is also a testament to our school, by the understanding and care shown, that our students thrive both academically and personally, allowing them to achieve their goals and thrive in society."

Maddox in Year 11 wanted to help raise funds for the charity. He contacted Tesco in Lydney who agreed to help by generously donating doughnuts for a cake sale at the school. Maddox, who is the Community and Inclusion Leader on the school's student leadership team said "What makes The Dean Academy special is that EPIC has been able to help me succeed in school. The EPIC Unit is the only one of its kind in Gloucestershire, and it is something I am really proud to be a part of. The provisions here mean a lot as it has benefited me both inside and outside of the school community."

Mrs Turley explained "The main point of World Autism Acceptance week is to have fun and raise awareness. As the past couple of weeks have demonstrated, being supportive can have a massive impact and can transform lives and change attitudes. To think that 60 years ago, autistic people were not fully understood with hardly any in mainstream education, is so far apart from where we are today."

YOUR 'SUPER 60' CHALLENGES!

Staff and students were busy last week with their Super 60 Challenges which included boxing, swimming, running, cycling, sit-ups, dog walking, football skills and creating artwork all based around the number 60 to raise awareness of World Autism Acceptance Week.



Autism Awareness: Fundraiser Maddox Tippins in Year 11 with EPIC staff Mrs Turley and Mrs Lavender



World Autism Acceptance Week

For World Autism Acceptance Week some of our EPIC students put pen to paper to describe what it is like for them living with autism.

MY AUTISM

"With my autism it can be difficult to understand other people's feelings and expressions. These feelings can be unobvious to my mind. When I see someone upset but not crying, I might think they are ok when they are upset. There are times when I can get anxious and nervous and maybe sometimes be out of control depending on where I am and what I can see and smell. Smells can trigger me so if I go in the kitchen when someone is cooking, I can become shaky and lightheaded as my anxiety would go super high. These are some effects of my autism.

Although there are negatives of being autistic, I enjoy it. There are various reasons for this, one being thinking outside the box - this is a very helpful attribute as this makes me creative, so I don't go with the normal thing - I just be me, even if people don't like it.

In school I, and other people, have the privilege of using the EPIC centre. This is here to support us and to help us adapt to the everyday environment. School without the EPIC centre I would be lost.

Thank you to everyone that has helped me on my way so far."

EPIC student

HOW AUTISM MADE ME FREE

"With autism I sometimes struggle understanding feelings of others. These feelings can sometimes be hidden from my brain, which may think that somebody is feeling a different emotion.

Sometimes I may feel negative feelings for the silliest of reasons. Feelings such as embarrassment and sadness may randomly kick in when it makes no sense.

Sometimes smells and sounds can trigger a bunch of these negative emotions. But there are ways to help myself with these problems. Sometimes I will do things that I enjoy. I usually will sit down and think it over.

I enjoy being autistic because despite the negatives there are overwhelming positives. The help I get from those around me has really affected me positively over the years. Now I feel like I can go out and do what I want with very little help.

I am now a semi-independent teenager. I feel like a member of society that can go and do what everybody else does. A couple of years ago this wouldn't be possible. I can blend into everyday life and fit in with everybody. I no longer struggle with many problems I used to have.

I thank all those who have helped me along the way."

EPIC student

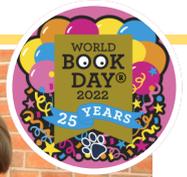


Lexia KS3 Awards



Headteacher Mr Brand presented a group of Key Stage 3 students with certificates to recognise their fantastic Lexia work. Lexia has really boosted their confidence and helped them with their independent learning. Well done everyone!

English Department



World Book Day

To mark 25 years of World Book Day, the English Department organised a whole week of activities to celebrate books and encourage reading.

Students had to guess the identity of the 'Masked Reader'. There was a Shelfie competition. Tutors read from their favourite childhood book. There was also an Escape Room Challenge in the Library where students had to find and solve literary puzzles to uncover a secret message.

The fastest group in KS3 was Ryan, George, Jonny and Harvey from Mr Webb's tutor group and they each won a copy of 'The Chime Seekers' by Ross Montgomery and 25 extra house points.

The fastest group in KS4 was Aspen, Ben, Simeon, Jayden and Adam in Mrs Price's tutor group and they each won a copy of 'This Woven Kingdom' by Tahereh Mafi and 25 extra house points. Well done!



KS3 winners from 8DW



Mr Edy was the 'Masked Reader'



KS4 winners from 11FP

Competition Success for Rachel

Last summer, English teacher Mrs Berry encouraged her students to write an entry for the Young Poets and Storytellers Competition which is part of the Mitcheldean Festival. Rachel in Year 11 entered the competition with her brilliant poem 'Equal' and was delighted when she found out that she had been awarded third place in her age category – a fantastic achievement in such a large competition. Well done Rachel!



Equal

They rise before us,
lift us up along them,
so we stand in solidarity,
but they turn their back on us
in the blink of an eye

Their suffering becomes our
suffering,
although the weight on our
shoulders
almost crushes us.
Death becomes a real possibility,
death for living?
A perfect punishment for us.

Hope becomes a fever dream,
power is like a myth.
Society, a death trap,
a deadly place.
But, in their eyes...
we're still equal.

UKMT Maths Challenge

'Over the last few months students from Years 7 to 10 have competed in the UK Maths Challenge.

The challenge is designed to make students think and it encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought, and fluency in using mathematical techniques to solve interesting problems.

Year 7 and 8 students participated in the 25th Anniversary Challenge, whilst Year 9 and 10 participated in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. The students did brilliantly and achieved some great results.

In the 25th Anniversary Challenge Charles achieved the

highest score, followed by Frederick and Cooper.

In the Intermediate Maths Challenge, Samuel achieved 'Best in School', Jacob achieved 'Best in Year 9' and Jamie and Oliver were awarded Bronze certificates.

A great effort from everyone who participated!

Sample question below - feel free to have a go!

Mr T Fessey



The diagram shows a large square divided into squares of three different sizes. What percentage of the large square is shaded?

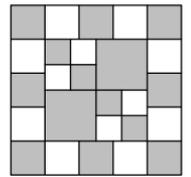
A 61%

B 59%

C 57%

D 55%

E 53%



Chess Club

The Maths Department run a Chess Club every lunchtime in Ms Meredith's classroom. All years are welcome.

If you are interested in playing chess please come along and see what our club is all about. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed and we are excited to be starting a knockout competition soon where house points are on offer.



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Performance

Frozen the Musical

The long awaited and much anticipated trip to Frozen the Musical in London finally arrived in March! Some students had been waiting 2 years to attend this trip, after it was cancelled and curtailed due to the pandemic.

49 students travelled by coach to London's Drury Lane Theatre. The students arrived on a day where much of London was at a standstill, as there was a huge public transport strike. It made for a slow journey, but one where they were able to take in the sights of The London Eye, The Houses of Parliament, Big Ben and much more, from the coach windows!

Once safely at Drury Lane Theatre, the students were given some free time in Covent Garden to explore the Apple Market, where there happened to be a live operatic performance taking place, as well as a street magician performing. Archie, Alfie and a small group scaled the multiple staircases of the Royal Opera House, and were directed to the amazing viewing platform on the upper floors, where they looked out over London and waved with delight at the teachers waiting below!

At 2pm we made our way to the theatre, and were able to view the costumes in cases in the main atrium before the show. Our seats were superb, with an outstanding view of the stage.

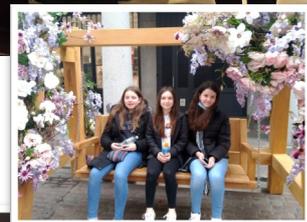
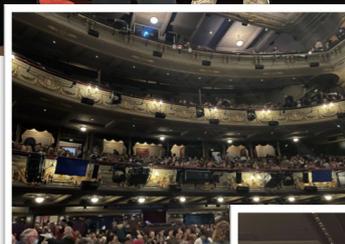
Elsa, Anna, Christophe and Sven, as well as numerous other characters, had our students mesmerised.

The enormity of the production wasn't missed by anyone. The multiple scene changes, props, costumes and special effects were absolutely astounding. Students were left open mouthed with shock and awe – especially when Elsa's dress literally changed from one into another in a lightning strike – we're still not entirely sure how they managed this!

The day was a huge success, some students having never been to London, others having never visited a theatre, all agreed that it had been a trip worth the wait!

What show are we visiting next?

Mrs K Rodway



Year 9 Drama

Students from Year 9 recently took part in a Drama workshop with Mr McNeill.

Their day consisted of revisiting skills and techniques in Drama in the first session and then putting those skills and techniques into performances in the afternoon.

Students worked together in small groups to produce performances from a selection of stimuli, they then performed these to the other group members during the session.

It was a great opportunity for our students to revisit practical Drama before choosing their Key Stage 4 Options.

Mrs K Rodway



'Wicked' Trip to Gloucester

Year 9 and 10 students had the pleasure of travelling to Gloucester to watch a live music performance. After a brief stop at Gloucester Cathedral for lunch, the group took their seats in the Gloucester Guildhall and eagerly awaited the performances from some of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's finest musicians. The students thoroughly enjoyed hearing performances of Bach's Brandenburg concerto, Mozart's Clarinet

Concerto, and the song 'Defying Gravity' from 'Wicked' the musical.

A highlight for the students was learning about how the music for IOS game 'Little Orpheus' was composed. Video game music is something that the students are keen to learn more about. A big thanks to Nick at Gloucestershire music for organising the event and to Mrs Dance for driving us. **Mr J Peacock**



Swindon Dance Workshop

Students in Year 9, 10 and 11 were treated to a contemporary dance workshop this term by Swindon Dance. Students were taught set material and then given the opportunity to explore and develop it in their own style to create a performance piece.

The workshops were challenging and really got students moving in different ways to very different pieces of music. The students involved worked really hard and rehearsed and practiced until they were able to achieve the challenges of the routines. It was very rewarding to see their expressions when they achieved something they thought that they couldn't do!



As Year 9 are about to choose their Options the workshop was a really interesting insight for them into Dance at Key Stage 4. For students studying Performing Arts in Year 10 and 11 the workshop offered them links to opportunities outside of school and future career pathways and elite performance groups. **Mrs K Rodway**

Music Exams

As this version of the newsletter goes to print, Oliver in Year 9 and April in Year 7 will have just sat their graded Music exams for brass, and Oliver is about to sit his graded music exam for piano! Good luck to you both, we look forward to hearing your results.



It's Back!

The Dean Academy whole school production ... 2023 will see 'Grease' hit The Dean Academy with lightning speed!

Watch the tutor bulletin for details of auditions, or see Mrs Rodway, Mr McNeill or Mr Peacock for more information. Our first production since the pandemic is going to be bigger and better than ever!



Duke of Edinburgh's Award



Silver Award

Congratulations to Maddie, Jake, Ayden, Josh and Simeon for recently completing the most challenging DofE expedition in the Brecon Beacons.

Sub-zero temperatures would test the resolve of the most experienced campers, but you all rose to every challenge and overcame every obstacle. We are so proud of you!

Ms S Paton



Duke of Edinburgh's Award: Bronze Expedition Training Day

A group of Year 9 students recently took part in a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition Training Day. Firstly, the participants pitched tents at the Park End Scout Centre. They then navigated back to The Dean Academy through the Forest of Dean countryside. Finally, they cooked a two-course meal on a Trangia. The day was lovely – warm and sunny – and the students all enjoyed the experience. Each student should be feeling very proud of themselves: their campcraft skills were sound and their navigation skills impressive. Fine teamwork made for a pleasant and relaxed day for all. Well done!

Ms S Paton



Zoology Society

The Dean Academy Zoology Society is run by Mr Kelley and Miss Musto in the Science Labs every Thursday after school. All years are welcome. Members of the society help to look after the animals which include cold water and tropical fish, frogs, crickets, geckos, cockroaches, and a giant snail called Celina.

They have also been researching and preparing suitable environments for some special new arrivals, such as a chameleon and some flower beetles which they hope will be here imminently, the tanks are built and ready! Members are aiming to raise money to make these purchases by holding a plant sale. They have grown a variety of tomato, chilli and spider plants as well as marigolds and chrysanthemums from seed.

For more information about the club please see Mr Kelley.



Boxing Clever

A massive congratulations to Troy in Year 10 who is a keen boxer and member of Lydney Boxing Club. Troy recently competed in the Camborne and Redruth Amateur Boxing Club tournament in

Cornwall and was delighted when he came first. He is pictured here with his medal and well earned trophy.

Troy took up the sport just over a year ago and this is his second competitive event.

Well done Troy!



Macmillan Fundraising

Anna McCoy, Assistant Director of SEN, has set herself a personal challenge this year to raise as much money as possible for the charity Macmillan Cancer Support.

Anna explained "I love raising money for Macmillan, the charity means a great deal to me for all that they have done for my friends and family."

In February, Anna took on a fitness challenge, she said "I completed 20 minutes of fitness every day throughout February, be it walking my dog, using my exercise bike, going for a (gentle) run, Zumba or a workout. It was a great way to improve my fitness whilst raising money!"

Anna's target for the fitness challenge was £150 and she raised a total of £236.

Other fundraising events are planned throughout the year, including the Macmillan Coffee Morning which Anna has hosted many times at the school over the years. Good luck Anna!



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Fundraising for Ukraine

Staff and students have been busy raising funds and collecting essential items to send to the people of Ukraine.

A non-uniform day was organised where staff and students were encouraged to come to school wearing blue and yellow clothes to show their support. Head of History and Geography, Mrs Fiona Price explained "We have also had lots of discussions with students in lessons about what is going on in the Ukraine and talked about their concerns over what they are seeing and hearing in the news. Students are feeling empathetic with those in the Ukraine and wanted to do something to help, so we decided to contribute to the DEC appeal for Ukraine by holding a non-uniform day. We have so far raised almost £600 for the cause."



Ms Meredith's tutor group 8AM raise funds for the people of Ukraine

The school have been overwhelmed by many generous donations of warm clothing, bedding, medicine, toiletries, nappies and non-perishable foods which have now been taken to a local drop off point and will soon be on its way to help the people of Ukraine. Mrs Kat Berry who helped organise this commented "Our wonderful students and The Dean Academy community have responded outstandingly to our fundraising efforts. We have received a fantastic amount of items for transport to Ukraine and have been overwhelmed with student offers to help with this appeal. So proud!"



Emma and Glyn load up the minibus with all of the generous donations received at the school



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