



The Dean

The Magazine of The Dean Academy



Issue 40

Easter 2026



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Update from the Headteacher

What an incredibly busy and successful term it has been here at TDA with lots of excellent work inside the classrooms and lots of extra-curricular events and opportunities; I could not be more proud of our students and how they fully embrace everything that is on offer to them. We have had many trips and visits this term, with students given the chance to visit universities, theatres, parliament buildings, other schools both in the Trust and local to The Forest of Dean, dance competitions, sporting events, Duke of Edinburgh and much more! In school we have celebrated National Careers week, Science week and the National Year of Reading – all of which you can see celebrated in this newsletter.

As our class of 2026 enter their final few weeks, I wish them well in their exams; I am absolutely certain that all of their hard work and dedication will pay off. We look forward to seeing many of them during our Easter revision sessions.

Also this term we of course welcomed Ofsted to the school for an inspection. We were very pleased that the inspection team identified that as a school we “set a clear and ambitious expectation that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well and thrive” and that pupils “feel safe and cared for”. We are also reassured that the areas of priority for us as a school that were identified align with what we were already working on.

At the end of this term we bid farewell to Mr Peacock who has been at the school since 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Peacock for all of the excellent work that he has done for our TDA community during his time here and wish him all the very best in his relocation to London. The Music department is being left in the very capable hands of Dr Matthews who will be taking over the reins as Head of Music and we welcome Ms Miller to the team who will be joining us after Easter.



We will also be saying goodbye to Miss Musto shortly after the Easter break as she embarks upon her new career in the Royal Navy. Thank you so much to her for all she has done both in Science and her role as Careers Lead here at TDA over the past 5 years – she will be greatly missed. We will be welcoming Mr Davis to the Science faculty in term 5.

All that is left from me to say is that I hope that everyone in our TDA community has an enjoyable and restful Easter break and I look forward to welcoming students back to school on Monday 13th April.

Hannah Rowlands, Headteacher

Yearbooks

The Year 11 Yearbooks are available to order online at <https://allyearbooks.co.uk/buy/24694>

The deadline for ordering is Sunday 12th July. The books will be ready to collect from school on the exams results day in August.

YEARBOOKS

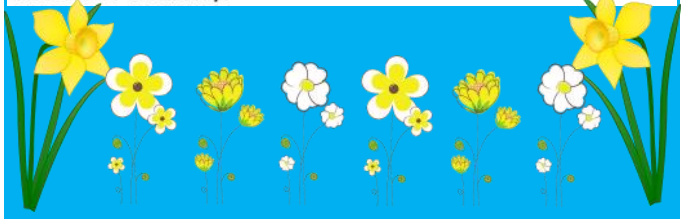
NOW AVAILABLE TO ORDER ONLINE



School Terms & Holidays 2026

TERM 5	BEGINS MAY-DAY HOL ENDS	Monday 13 th April Monday 4th May Friday 22 nd May (3.15 p.m.)
	HOLIDAY	Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May
TERM 6	BEGINS TRUST INSET DAY ENDS	Monday 1 st June Friday 26th June Tuesday 21 st July (12.30 p.m.)
	HOLIDAY	Wednesday 22nd July – Monday 31st August

Version 1-2025 – 2026 holidays



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Mock Parliament

A group of our Year 9 students are taking part in an exciting initiative launched by local MP Matt Bishop. The Forest of Dean Schools Youth Parliament brings together students from schools across The Forest of Dean to attend special workshops that explore how Parliament operates. The students will attend five sessions, all leading to a final debate later in the year at the District Council Chamber.

Matt Bishop MP said "It was fantastic to see young people debating topics they care about, from AI to climate change and building confidence to use their voice."

In the first session the student were joined by the Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Chief Whip), who held a Q&A with students and explained the role of a whip in government.

In their second session which was hosted at The Dean Academy, they focused on the debating procedure used in the House of Commons, so there was lots of waving paper, banging on tables and shouting!

Matt Bishop MP added "This is such an exciting opportunity for students across The Forest of Dean, and I'm delighted to bring this together. During the second session, we discussed parliamentary protocol and learned the etiquette of the chamber — from debating and speaking in the House of Commons, to how to properly address the Speaker, and much more. It was fantastic to see protocol put into practice as students selected their cabinets and stood against one another to apply the theory they had learned. It's really great to see confidence growing among the students and to watch their understanding of Parliament develop in real time."



Your View, Your Voice Workshop

This term, a group of students took part in a Forest of Dean District Council initiative called 'Your View Your Voice' which is dedicated to preventing violence against women and girls.

Male students took part in a workshop on rethinking masculinity, which was delivered by The Hollie Gazzard Trust. The session created a safe space for discussions about gender expectations, harmful stereotypes and media influence and covered topics such as respect, consent, emotional wellbeing and healthy relationships.

Female students took part in a self-defence class led by Forest Fighting Fit Boxing and Fitness, which included tips on how to stay safe and being aware of surroundings.

All students then took part in an active bystander training session, to develop the skills to recognise when situations could escalate and how and when to intervene safely and effectively.



Dance

This term we hosted a special Secondary School Day of Dance! It was great to have students from Wydean School, Bradon Forest and John Masefield School join in with the contemporary and street dance workshop where they learnt lots of dance moves. In the afternoon there was a fun competition where all schools showcased their performances. A massive thank you to Swindon Dance Academy for leading the event.



Dance Trip to London



A group of our Year 10 Performing Arts students travelled to London last Friday for the 'Move It' Dance Event at the Excel Arena. It was a great day filled with performances from various dance companies, as well as workshops for the students and lots of stalls and information for all things dance!



Primary Dance Event

Our fantastic Year 10 Performing Arts students hosted a special dance event for 135 Year 5 primary school pupils. They all learnt a dance routine and performed in a mini competition - in 3rd place was Pillowell School, 2nd place was Aylburton School and the winners were from Parkend School. Well done to everyone who took part.



U12 Football



Our U12s had a smashing first football fixture at Newent School on Tuesday. The girls played phenomenally well in really tricky conditions, coming away with 1 win, 2 draws and a loss.

KS3 Netball



Our KS4 students took part in a Netball fixture against Wydean School this term. Both teams worked really hard and played in multiple positions. Great play as the games went on and as different students played together on court against the 2 different teams!

Football Fixture

Students played some outstanding fixtures against Wydean School. We love to see so many active students!



Netball Games Event

A massive thank you to our fantastic Year 10 students who helped out at the Primary Netball Games event at The Dean Academy. They all helped with the umpiring and organisation to ensure that the event ran smoothly. Well done!



Cross Country

A group of our students recently travelled to Essex to take part in The South West Regional Schools Cross Country competition.

Huge congratulations to all who took part especially Lily in Year 10, who finished 8th overall for her group, 3rd in Gloucestershire and 1st U15 girl! Lily has qualified to race in The National School Cross Country competition later in the year! Well done.



U14 Girls Football



Our U14 Girls Football team travelled to Cirencester Town Football Club to take part in the County Finals. The girls played outstandingly well and didn't concede a goal or game all tournament! The coaches Player of the Match was Maisie for outstanding goalkeeping. Well done all!

Year 11 Shakespeare Workshop

Mr Osborne took a group of Year 11 students to Malmesbury School for a special collaborative Shakespeare experience. Throughout the day they took part in various activities including performing a scene from Macbeth!



Maths Trust Challenge

This term we hosted The Athelstan Trust Year 8 Maths Challenge. Year 8 students from schools across the Trust gathered together for a fun day of tricky Maths challenges! It was great to welcome our new trust school, Abbeyfield, to the event. A massive thank you to our fantastic Year 9 and 10 helpers who were a real credit to the school and made the day run smoothly.



International Women's Day



For International Women's Day, we invited Lauren, Chloe and Laura, three successful women working in the Forest of Dean, to talk to our Year 10 students about their education and career paths. We really appreciate them all giving up their time for our students, they found it really interesting and inspirational.

Chloe, a former student at The Dean Academy said "I was really grateful to get the opportunity to head back to my old school to feature on a panel event for International Women's Day. Stepping back into the school 6 years after I left was honestly one of the craziest experiences yet. So many memories came flooding back! As alumni, the feeling of sharing my story, both within my working career and my 'Her Game Too' journey felt extra special because it hit home at just how much has happened since I left back in 2020."

Year 10 Mock Interviews

Our Year 10 students stepped confidently into the world of work, taking part in mock interviews designed to build their communication skills and self-belief. From answering challenging questions to presenting themselves professionally, they rose to the occasion with maturity and enthusiasm. A fantastic experience helping them prepare for their future pathways. Thank you so much to all our volunteers and to everyone involved!



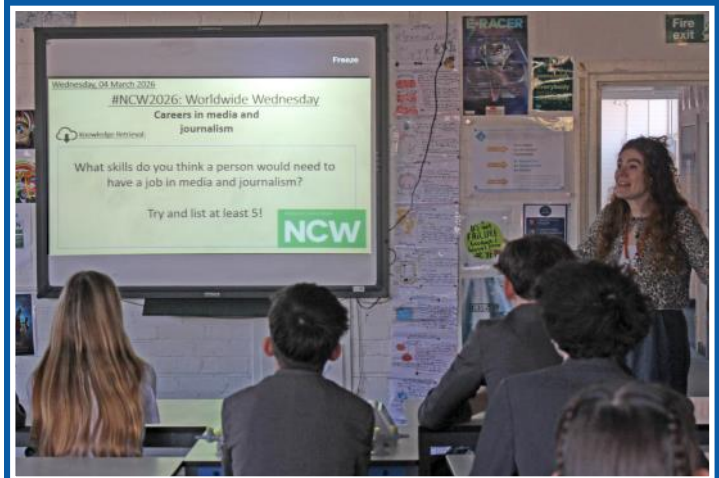
Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise runs on Mondays after school with Mr Gunter for students in Year 9 and 10. It's a fantastic opportunity for students to create their own business in school, and a great chance for them to learn about the world of business and work.



National Careers Week

As part of National Careers Week, every first lesson for our KS3 students, was dedicated to looking at different growing industries and the skills required to enter those fields. Students explored careers in sport, medicine, engineering, music and journalism. Each session included group discussions and a link to BBC Bitesize with lots of valuable career information from influential people in the various industries. This has been a great opportunity for our students to reflect on different careers and their pathways.



Year 9 Army Careers Event

Our Year 9 students had the opportunity to meet with The Royal Armoured Corps and The Infantry from The British Army to get an insight into life in the military, pay, benefits and career progression. They enjoyed some fun team working sessions in the Sports Hall and got to try out some of the kit!



Careers

National Apprenticeship Week



To mark National Apprenticeship Week (NAW), Mrs Berry has been looking at apprenticeships with her Year 9 students as they prepare for the Careers unit in their Personal Development lessons. NAW highlights how apprenticeships and skills can open doors to exciting and rewarding careers for young people.



Year 10 ASDAN

Our Year 10 ASDAN students had a special Careers show and tell session with TA Mrs Phipps-Shaw, who spoke about her career in The Royal Air Force. She brought in some photos and uniform to show them and they asked lots of questions about her career and life in the RAF.



Year 9 Motivational Speaker



This term, our Year 9 students enjoyed a visit from Kamal, a motivational speaker working in partnership with GROWS and Aim a Little Higher. Kamal works in schools to deliver high-impact, engaging and practical programmes giving students the skills, mindset and most importantly, genuine belief that they can achieve more than their current circumstances may suggest.

Student Receptionists

This term, we were excited to launch our student receptionist initiative as part of our Careers programme. Our receptionists have shown excellent organisation and communication skills.



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World Book Day: Thursday 5th March 2026

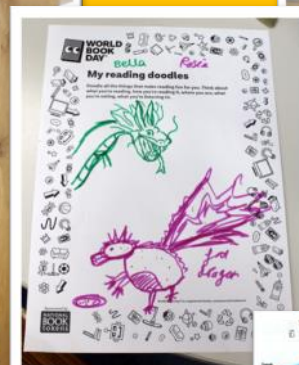
World Book Day was a wonderful celebration of stories, imagination and reading together with lots of fun activities for our students to get involved with! Organised by Miss Radcliffe, students enjoyed a special book quiz in tutor time, there were creative challenges in the school library at lunchtime to design bookmarks and book jackets and students took advantage of a book exchange giving them the opportunity to swap an old book for a new one. During lessons, teachers read aloud an extract from their favourite book for students to write a review on. A great day to encourage a love of reading!



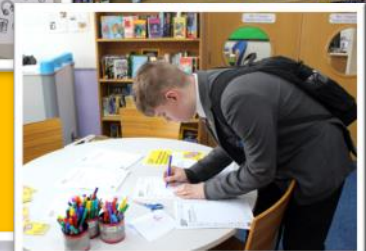
Book exchange in the Library



Book Tokens



Reading doodles!



Creative activities



Reading aloud

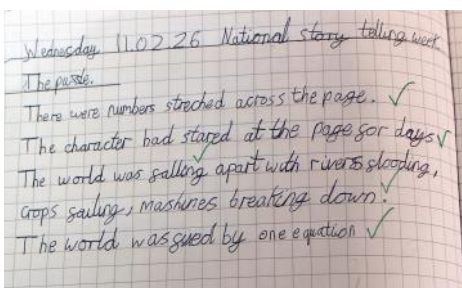


A quiz at tutor time

National Storytelling Week



Our Key Stage 3 students took part in lots of fun activities for National Storytelling Week. This included a chance to enter a national story writing competition and enjoy stories in lessons and tutor time.



It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to celebrate the power of sharing stories!



Celebration

Good Eggs



These are our fantastic 'Good Eggs'. Each student was nominated by their tutor as an all-round 'good egg' contributing in a positive way to our school community. They each received a certificate from the Headteacher, an Easter egg and a hot chocolate in the school restaurant. Well done all!

Celebration Breakfasts

Congratulations to our hardworking students who were treated to celebration breakfasts this term. They were selected for academic progress, effort, community and kindness! Well done!



Here are our Year 11 top 10 performing students in the recent Mock Exams. They each received a prize from Mr Fessey!



Annual Music Awards 2026

The Dean Academy Music Awards 2026 was a truly fantastic celebration of the talent, dedication and creativity of our students. The evening was filled with outstanding performances, showcasing not only musical skill but also confidence, commitment and passion. Every student involved should be incredibly proud of what they achieved.

It was wonderful to see so many students recognised for their hard work, with trophies, medals, certificates and Music Ambassador badges awarded to those who have demonstrated excellence and commitment throughout the year. The standard was exceptionally high, making each achievement even more impressive.

The event was a real highlight of the school calendar and a testament to the vibrant and supportive musical community we have at The Dean Academy. It has been an absolute pleasure for me to teach and work with such talented and enthusiastic students.

I would like to congratulate all students involved and wish them every success as they continue their musical journeys. I have no doubt that they will go on to achieve great things as they progress through the rest of their school careers.

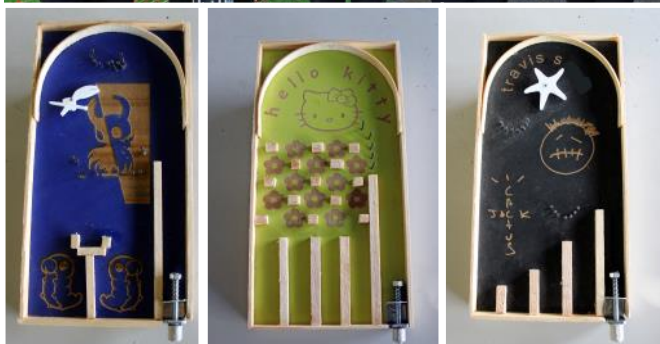
Mr J Peacock



Design & Technology

Pinball Project

Ms Collier was very impressed with her Year 9 Technology Class who have completed their Pinball Machine project and produced some excellent work!



Art Primary Transition

We were really impressed with the standard of artwork that Year 5 pupils from Newnham St Peters School created when they visited our Art Department for a Primary Transition session with Mrs Charles. They created some beautiful leaves that will be part of a special display in the Art Department. Great work!



Pizza

Year 8s made delicious pizzas for their Food Technology Assessment with Miss Thayer.



Year 7 Shields

Year 7s have made some fantastic shields in their D&T lessons with Mr Winstanley – well done!



Year 9 Curry

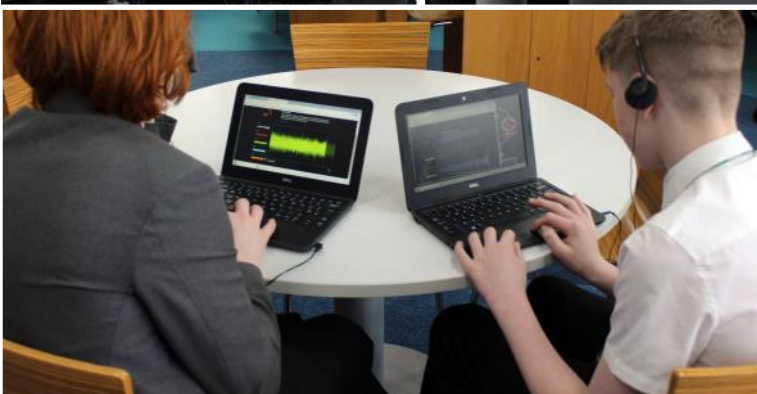
Year 9s created some fantastic curry dishes with Mrs Gittins-Jones.



British Science Week

In celebration of British Science Week, The Dean Academy were privileged to receive a visit from Dr Paul Hopkins, a computational scientist, who spoke to a group of Year 8 students regarding his academic career and his accomplishments as a valued member of the Cardiff University Gravity Exploration Institute, which is part of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration. During his time with the institute, the first observation of gravitational waves was made, known as the GW150914 signal. This breakthrough was awarded both the 'Special Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics', as well as a 2017 Nobel Prize in Physics awarded to Rainer Weiss, Barry Barish and Kip Thorne for their decisive contributions to detecting gravitational waves.

Our students were able to practice searching for gravitational waves themselves using the platform 'Black Hole Hunter'. Amazing work by Elwood G, Jay D and Millie W for completing all levels!



Primary Transition



It was great to have pupils from Lydney C of E in our Science labs with Mr Webb. They were very brave and demonstrated some fantastic skills dissecting a heart! Great work.



Animal Aid Presentation



A massive thank you to Gail from the animal rights organisation, Animal Aid, who spoke to our Year 10 students about the environmental impact of animal farming.

Not only was this incredibly thought provoking for our students, but it was also really valuable to their studies as it links to their GCSE Science modules including Ecology, Using Resources and Chemistry of the Atmosphere.

Clubs

TCG Club

Our new Trading Card Game Club is now well underway. There was plenty of trading taking place and playing games including Pokémon and One Piece this term! The Club runs after school every Tuesday in E13 with Mr Hughes, all years are welcome.



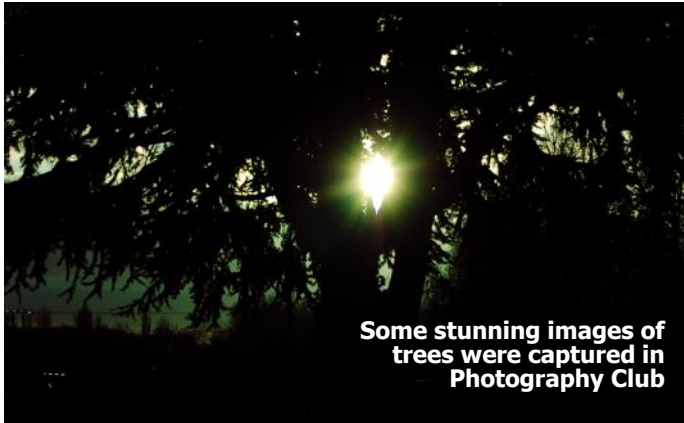
Science Art & Crafts

Lots of fun session in Science Arts and Crafts Club this term. Students enjoyed making these colourful creations from modelling clay!



Photography Club

Our Photography Club members have been out and about taking these lovely photos on the school site.

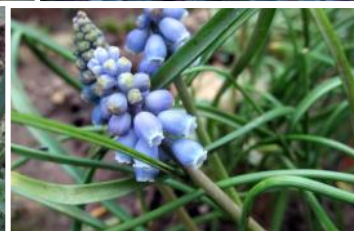
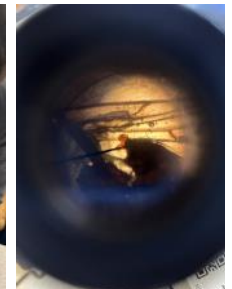
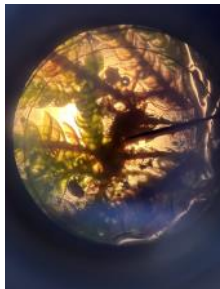


Some stunning images of trees were captured in Photography Club

Recently in the club, students got stuck in making nutritious fat balls for wintering birds around the school site.



They also made their own incredibly interesting microscope slides!



Crochet Club



Crochet Club members are really enjoying their afterschool sessions with Miss Holt on Thursday in P1. They are crafting some amazing items!

D of E Bronze

Over 50 of our Bronze DofE students did a great job out on their first ever practise expedition around Symonds Yat. They all persevered in the wind and the rain and came together as a group setting up at the campsite and making their own dinner. We look forward to their next expedition in June!



Lego Club

Lego Club runs every Tuesday lunchtime for Years 7 and 9 with Mrs Porter.



Wellbeing Wednesdays

Year 10 tutor group, 10SCO, came up with the brilliant idea of having a 'Wellbeing Wednesday' during tutor time across the whole school on every last Wednesday of the month. During a working breakfast with the Headteacher they planned out their ideas for the rest of the academic year.



One of their ideas was having a calming mindfulness session of colouring with their tutors which our students really enjoyed. Brilliant!!



The Dean Academy Community

Random Acts of Kindness Day

Following a school assembly announcing our Random Acts of Kindness Challenge and encouraging positivity through small, selfless gestures, we were pleased to learn that Alfie, Riley and Jayden in 9ER have really taken this on board.

They are all members of a local boxing club and when some new members started who were shy and nervous all three boys stepped up and have been helping them to train and settle in. Alfie, Riley and Jayden joined the club initially as part of their DofE programme, they quickly picked up the skills and are really thriving. We are very proud of them for trying something new but more importantly putting others before themselves and helping out!

The challenge was a fantastic opportunity for our students to think about how we treat others and celebrate kindness in all its forms!



School Therapy Dog



Our School Therapy dog, Pan, is very much settled now in the school community and the students love having him on-site!

Theatre Trip

Our students had a fantastic time this term watching Disney's 'Hercules' at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in London. They really enjoyed the musical adaptation of the 1997 animated film.



Work Experience

Great to have former student, Ines, back with us in school for a week of work experience. Ines is now studying Sports and Exercise Science at Hartpury College and has returned to The Dean Academy for some work experience! The staff in PE and MFL kept her busy!



Year 11 Prom Bake Sale

Our Year 11 Food Technology students have been busy baking and decorating these fantastic cakes to sell during break time to raise money for their upcoming Prom. Great work!

