

Dormers Diary

December 2016

From the Headteacher...



Welcome to an absolutely packed edition of *Dormers Diary*. So many great things are going on at school at the moment that it has been a challenge fitting them all in.

I've been delighted to witness a step change in the work ethic of our Year 11s who, under the leadership of Head of Year Ms Smith, have clearly returned from their summer break re-energised and determinedly striving for success. It was great to see so many of those Year 11s, along with counterparts from other high schools, enjoying the buzz of our

Sixth Form Open Evening. Everywhere I look around the school I see grounds for optimism that the excellent results we achieved this summer are just the beginning of a sustained success story that is being written here.

That success enhances our ability to support our local primary schools and it is with great pleasure that our staff and students have been working with Dormers Wells Junior School, Lady Margaret Primary School and Allenby School to help students with curriculum areas ranging from computing to music. Our partnerships with these schools are an important factor in the successes that Dormers Wells students achieve and it is hugely satisfying to work with them on these activities.

Amongst the large number of successes we are celebrating in this issue, I wish to highlight two in particu-

lar. The first, featured on page 2, is the triumph of Mohamed Sharif Ali in the London Youth Games under-15 Cross Country Championship. This really is an exceptional feat. The second success I want to highlight is that of Year 13 student Julia Keck, who has entered the ranks of artists talented enough to have been paid money for their work after having her ability noticed by entrepreneur and DWHS alumnus Kanwardeep Ahluwalia. Kanwardeep purchased one of Julia's pieces (above, left) after witnessing her working as part of our collaboration with Villiers High School this half term. My sincere congratulations go to both of these very talented young people.

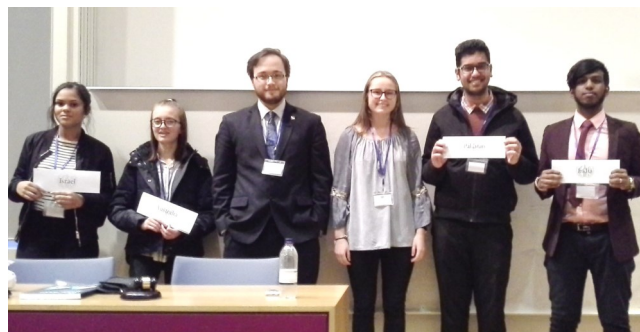


I wish you all a happy break and look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday 3rd January.

Róisín Walsh
Headteacher

United Nations model citizens

Late November saw a group of Year 11 and Sixth Form students participating in the International Model United Nations Conference at King's College, London. Displaying great commitment, insight and resilience in what could be at times an intimidating atmosphere, the students worked in committees to debate and draft resolutions on major global issues including the prevention of the acquisition of biological weapons, reducing marine pollution



and human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. The contributions of three students were recognised with awards. Sixth former Daniel

Ward received a delegate award for delegates with a special mention, while Year 11s Rebecca Pepple and Maria Williams were named as outstanding delegates.

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Designs on success



Year 9 and 10 product design students were visited by Sally Jones of the Design Museum (above) in November. Her visit was designed to help students participating in the Design Ventura competition and looked at previous winning entries and the importance of packaging. Year 9 student Keren Sondi said afterwards: "Sally was a great help to our product design challenge and taught us valuable information about graphics which we will use in future work."

Literature in context



Sixth Form English students visited the British Library for a 'Literature in Context' workshop in November. They learnt how to access and utilise the Library and its website for wider reading and research. The workshop is intended to aid their studies as they continue their studies. The visit was described as 'insightful', 'interesting' and 'thought-provoking' by students.

Cross-country champion

Mohamed Sharif Ali (right) was crowned London Youth Games under-15 cross country champion on 19th November. A second Dormers Wells student competing, Hanad Ahmed, came 90th in the field of 180 runners. Multi-gold medal winning Olympian Mo Farah finished ninth in the competition when he competed in it.



Inspiring tomorrow's engineers

Year 9 students enjoyed an Inspire Engineering event at the London Transport Museum's Acton depot during the Engineering UK-run Tomorrow's Engineers Week in November. The group participated in a hands-on 'braking eggsperiment', explored engineering wonders on display, and met young engineers from Siemens and Transport for London.



Debating skills shine

Students in Years 9 and 10 have been developing their debating and public speaking skills this half-term.

Year 10 students enjoyed a Speakers Trust workshop in late October. The workshops focused on the three core competencies for public speaking: delivery, structure and content. Two students, Roopal Joy and James Makepeace (below), were chosen to represent Dormers Wells in the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge regional final, which was due to take place as this newsletter went to press. Also acquitting themselves well, despite being matched against older competitors, were Year 9 students Abbie Jensen and Yash Markendy, who represented Dormers Wells against Cardinal

Wiseman RC High School in the ESU Schools' MACE debating competition.

Meanwhile, a group of Year 9 and 10 students were present at the launch of the Debate Mate programme at the Emmanuel Centre in Westminster. The group enjoyed an exhibition debate and the opportunity to test their skills in front of a large audience. They will now attend a sixteen-week programme to develop their abilities.



Diary dates

Tues 3rd January: School resumes after Christmas holiday
Thurs 5th January: 6th Form pre-public examinations begin
Thurs 26th January: Year 12 and 13 Parents' Evening
Fri 10th February: School breaks up for half-term holiday

Puppetry workshop



Sixth Form and Year 11 Health and Social Care and GCSE Art students were privileged to enjoy a session with puppeteer and survivor of human trafficking Raven Kaliana in November. Raven screened and answered questions about a film she had made documenting her experiences, before a session in which students learnt to create and manipulate their own shadow puppets.

Sociology conference



A Level Sociology students attended a one-day conference at the Institute of Education in November. Speakers included Baroness Doreen Lawrence and Professors from Oxford, Kent and City universities. The conference addressed topics including trends in crime statistics, the gender pay gap and the effects of social inequalities.

Gothic author visits

Emma Carroll (right), author of *Frost Hollow Hall*, *The Girl Who Walked on Air* and *Strange Star*, visited school to lead sessions looking at gothic literature this half-term. The day concluded with participants producing original story ideas.



Computing students' application

Year 9 Computer Science students took part in a National Digital Day event with ambassadors from industry in November. They faced challenges including developing social media strategies that were judged in a *Dragon's Den*-style for-



mat at the end of the day. The dragons praised the students' can-do attitude and the amazing creativity they demonstrated.

Four of the students (left) have been furthering their studies during weekends, enjoying computing classes held by the Royal Institute at the Royal Masonic School in Rickmansworth. The classes, which are led by professional programmers and high-ranking engineers, have helped the girls develop their understanding of computer science and the kind of careers open to them after university.

Re-writing Africa

Year 10 students enjoyed a *Rewriting Africa* workshop with Ini Dele-Adedeji (right) of the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies in November. The session encouraged students to think about the influence of European colonisation on the portrayal of the continent in literature and to challenge and overcome stereotypes that are prevalent.

The session was well received by students, who welcomed the fresh perspective on African history and literature and encouragement to think about and challenge stereotypes it provided.



Students taking care of business

Year 13 students gained an insight into careers at leading financial businesses with a trip to KPMG at Canary Wharf on 19th October.

The group took part in employability workshops and STEM challenges, had a tour of the company's offices and met apprentices. The trip saw them learning more about career options for school leavers, while developing their communication and team working skills. The trip was described by participants as "Interesting" and "helpful".

The visit came a week after a group of Year 10 students visited the Sky Academy. They enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the Sky studios, giving them an insight into the dai-



ly operations of a broadcast facility and the range of careers in engineering and IT the company has available. The day included workshops, lectures and challenges, and was designed to nurture problem solving, team working and self-management skills. In feedback, students described the day as "exciting" and "inspirational".

Artwork of the Half-Term

Our latest Artwork of the Half-Term is an untitled sculpture by Year 13 student Raghad Zuraiki. Created in cardboard, egg shells, string and paint, the piece explores themes of movement and time. It was created as part of a sculpture project event at Villiers High School, at which Raghad and other Dormers Wells Sixth Formers helped out. That event was led by professional artist Raj Dagstani, who is familiar to the Dormers Wells community as the man who led the project to create Stars Like Dust, the sculpture that greets visitors to the school outside the main reception.



Captains' Harrow visit



Eight students made a visit to Harrow Boys School in November to learn more about the house system there. They were buddied with a Harrow counterpart and given a tour of the school and the chance to assist with the duties the Harrow Captains perform.

News in brief

Sixth Form Media Studies students visited the British Film Institute (below) in November for a **representation seminar**. The seminar considered the way people of different ethnicities and genders are depicted in films, television, music videos and political campaigns, and how events can be portrayed in different ways.



Twenty-four Year 11 students attended a **Brilliant Club** graduation ceremony at SOAS in November. The event was the culmination of a scholar's programme that included lectures by PhD students and a university-style assignment. Participants followed either a humanities or STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) strand. Seventy-nine per cent of Dormers participants achieved either a first class or upper second classification, compared to a national average of just 70 per cent.



November's **Sixth Form Open Evening** (above) proved a huge success, with two-thirds of our own Year 11 students attending to explore their options for further study.

They were joined by students from other institutions, attracted by Dormers Wells' growing reputation, for an informative and buzzy evening.



Students and staff raised £990.30 for the 2016 BBC **Children in Need** appeal in November. Money-making activities included a guess-the-teacher photo mash-up competition, the sale of samosas and cakes, henna tattooing (below) and paying to wear non-uniform.



Year 8 students have been embracing the **'Beat the Street'** challenge. It sees them accumulating points by 'tapping in' at boxes located across the borough (including box 38 in front of school, above). The initiative is designed to encourage walking and boost fitness.

Dormers Wells' Key Stage 3 and 4 **badminton** players achieved a clean sweep in Ealing borough competitions this half term. The boys and girls teams in both age groups will now go forward to represent the borough in the West London championships early in 2017.

This half-term has also seen the start of weekly after-school **cricket coaching** sessions. Led by Capital Kids Cricket, they take place on Wednesdays and are open to students in Years 7 and 8.