



Dormers Diary



From the Headteacher

Welcome to the first Dormers Diary of the academic year 2020-21. It was wonderful to welcome back all our staff and young people. I can honestly say that in 27 years of education I have never experienced a year like this one. While dealing with the Covid crisis has presented us with an extraordinary challenge, I feel we have adjusted very well and, in the process, learnt so much about helping and supporting each other and exploring different ways of working. So, while we are not out of the woods yet by any means, we do feel that we have been presented with opportunities which in the end will enhance our teaching and learning and overall support of students. I would like to offer my very sincere and heartfelt thanks to all parents, students and our wonderful staff who have helped us make this possible.

It was a strange year for Year 11 and 13 who had studied hard in preparation for their exams only to have them cancelled at the eleventh hour. We are very proud of all their hard work and pleased to announce another set of impressive results. Here at Dormers Wells, we have established a trend of year-on-year improvement, underlining how well our approach is working.

Seventy percent of all A Levels were achieved at grades A* to C, with almost half at grades A* to B and 19% either A* or A. Results in vocational subjects were also strong, with every student taking BTEC Courses gaining three substantial qualifications. Those results have secured students places at a number of Russell Group and other leading universities including Imperial College London, Kings College London, City University of London, Queen Mary University of London, UCL, University of Warwick and the University of Leeds to read subjects including Pharmacy, Biomedical Science, Aerospace Engineering, Law and Nursing. One student has secured a prestigious level 3-degree apprenticeship with Amazon.

I was particularly pleased by the success of Cambridge-bound Amarvir and Oxford-bound Samia. Amarvir is reading engineering and Samia is reading Medicine at St Catherine's College. I was also pleased to learn that four students are taking-up placements at Imperial College, London and a further seven students joined Kings College London to study a variety of courses such as: Mathematics and Computer Science, Neuroscience, Mechanical Engineering and Business Management to name a few.

The excellence of those results was mirrored in Year 11, with 55% of students achieving a 9-5 grade in English and mathematics while 28% of students achieved 9-7 in all subjects.

We do not intend to rest on our laurels here at Dormers Wells and

are equally committed to our success in the future. I was pleased to see record numbers of Year 6 families visit our very first virtual Open Evening and I am very proud of our Head Boy and Head Girl who took centre stage in the event.

In the more immediate future, the current Year 11s have made a very promising start to 2020-21. Again, our recent Focus Evenings were viewed virtually, and we have already seen the students embracing the revision sessions that have begun. Another source of encouragement is the latest statistics for the use of GCSEPod, a resource that provides podcasts to help with studies; we were recognised as having the highest usage across the UK in September!

At DWHS we also strive to develop students who adopt the virtues of respect and tolerance, and who are driven, confident and strive to be the best. In addition to their academic lives we also want our students to benefit from extra-curricular experiences in the arts, sport, and culture, which will help them become more rounded, balanced adults. Earlier this year Mr Ramsland worked with the Executive Student Council to develop the Dormers Wells Character Values which were launched this term. You can read more about these values in this edition of Dormers Diary.

Despite an unusual start to the school year we already have plenty to celebrate. I want to acknowledge the commitment of staff and students for making it all possible. The school's Governors have also asked me to convey their appreciation of the continuing hard work they see. By maintaining the focus and application with which we have begun the year, the school community gives itself every chance of enjoying yet another summer of celebrations in 2021.

Finally, I would like to wish our students a well-deserved, but socially distant, half term break.

Ms R Walsh
Headteacher



From the Head Boy and Head Girl



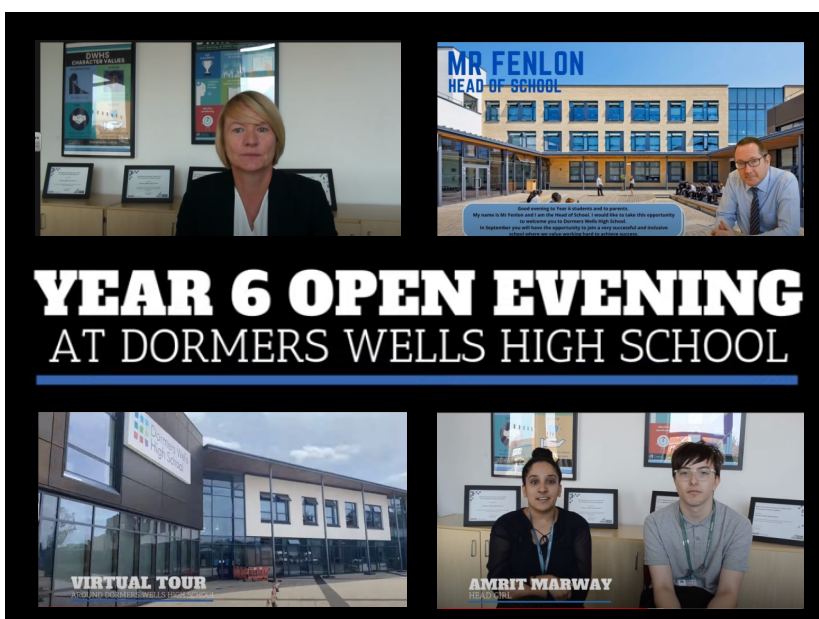
After five months at home, in quarantine, it is so refreshing and exciting to be back at school. This half term has brought lots of hurdles, as we revisit lockdown work and become accustomed to the current 'bubbling system'. However, it is great to see the school community unify and adapt to this new and challenging environment. Even with a stressful first few weeks with mock exams and finalising UCAS for our fellow year 13s in the 6th form, this term has been an inspiring start to the school year. A highlight of the half term for us has been the virtual Open Evening which was a great accomplishment that allowed us to showcase our school to prospective year six students, even with the limitations of the Covid restrictions. After an undoubtedly successful first half term for the school, we look forward to seeing the same success and progression continue into the rest of the school year.

DWHS makes the news!

We were delighted to be put forward by one of our technology partners, to be showcased in a recent BBC News segment on Blended Learning. This is a where technology is used to support more traditional means of learning. Three of our students spoke about how they use GCSEPod to help them revise over time, and to access content before lessons in order to prepare themselves for the upcoming content. In further fantastic news, we were recognised by GCSEPod to have the highest usage across the UK in September, demonstrating how our students have returned to school with a mind-set focused on achieving great outcomes. Our teachers have been working hard with students across years nine to eleven to help them develop good note-taking skills, which includes recognising how to take notes based on what they are learning. If your child is in years nine to eleven, you can support their learning by asking them to show you their pre-learning and revision notes, and encouraging them to watch at least one pod a day to support these activities.



Virtual Open Evening



Due to Covid-19, this September saw Dormers Wells High School hosting our first ever virtual Open Evening. The virtual Open Evening was a great success, gaining over 700 views and a lot of positive feedback. Throughout the 30 minute video parents, guardians and potential students were greeted by our head teacher, head of school, head boy and head girl, as well as all of our curriculum leaders. Viewers were also able to see a virtual tour of the whole school, venturing to the various different departments, showing off the fantastic facilities the school has to offer. Although we were not able to host the evening as we usually would, the virtual Open Evening still highlighted how fantastic our school is. From the level of hard work and perseverance demonstrated by students and staff, to our caring and compassionate community which makes it such a successful and happy place to be. We hope to see plenty of new faces next year!

Ask yourself:

**“If I send my friend this photo,
what might they do with it one
day if we fall out?”**

Our Character Values

We want our students to become independent learners, who are critical in their thinking, informed in their choices and confident in their ability to succeed in the modern world. We also want students who are respectful, tolerant, driven and who strive for the best. In addition to their academic lives we also want our students to benefit from extra-curricular experiences in the arts, sport and culture, which will help them become well rounded balanced adults. Last year students and staff together created a memorable collection of values that could be concisely articulated to our community. The executive student council made the final decision on DWHS values and they are:



House points

Citius	282	Laurus	318
Magnus	297	Invictus	270
Altius	288	Fortius	308

Upcoming Dates

2nd November	Return to school
4th November	Occasional Day
5th November	Year 9 Parents' Evening
19th November	Sixth Form Open Evening
26th November	Year 7 Parents' Evening
14th December	Year 11 PPE results event
18th December	Last day of term
4th January	Return to school

The Mobile Library

Since coming back in September, our students have been divided into year bubbles throughout different areas of the school. As the library is now the sixth form zone, our librarian is offering a mobile service to the rest of the school. Ms Cattell regularly fills the trolley with exciting recommended novels and transports them around the school to students in Years 7-9. Students in Year 10 and 11 are able to reserve books using the library database, which is then delivered to their classroom. Students return their books into a box placed in each bubble area, which is then quarantined, ready for the next reader to enjoy.



Wigwams

Year 8s have been looking at different types of architecture this term starting with the most basic building structures. These wigwams were made after researching the significance of the images that were drawn on the outside and the meanings attached to the poles used.



Settling into Year 7

"I was quiet nervous but excited in my new school, my experience so far at DWHS has been amazing. The whole inside of the building is neat, tidy and clean making it a healthy place for us all to learn and study. However due to the pandemic the way we move in the school has changed but the school has provided many safety measures; hand sanitizers, boxes of tissues and washing our hands whenever we sneeze or cough. This way everyone stays healthy and safe. DWHS is a great way to making new friends and knowing my classmates has been really exciting. All teachers have different personalities, funny but some are strict and serious which is good too!" Maryam, 7MB

"My name is Mohammad Saleh Quareshi, I joined Dormers Wells High School as a new Year 7 student a few weeks ago. I was a little bit nervous at the start, however once I started talking to people I started to fit right in. I enjoy school a lot, there are a variety subjects and a variety of teachers with a range of different personalities. Some are really funny, some are really strict, some are very kind but it is all just perfect. I love Dormers Wells High School and I hope you do too!" Mohammad, 7PE



Year 12 Historians

On Tuesday 29th September Year 12 History students took part in an online webinar looking at the US presidential election and its links to history. The hour long session focused on the science of politics and how data, polls research and understanding voters is impacting the US Presidential election today and was delivered by Dr Henry Thomson from Arizona State University. This not only helped the students to expand their historical understanding of US politics but also helped them to gain a sense of what a career in politics would involve.



New House Captains!

After strong applications from many DWHS young people, Ms Blakebrough has selected a range of House Captains they will be working closely with Ms Blakebrough and Ms Girvan to create engaging and fun house competitions. Congratulations to; Uzair (7DA), Amneet (7DA), Simran (7MH), Rianna (7KA), Jaishika (8SY), Wasay (8HY), Sameer (8JN), Chatatpreet (9MU), Anas (9HN), Renee (10GC), Hodan (10PD), Eesar (10PC), Adam (11PW), Gurshann (11PW), Mahi (11HA), Sharda (SDU) and Roopal (SWR).



Art of the month

Year 11 are continuing to build up their art portfolios looking at 'food in art'. Since returning in September, they have studied the artist Seurat who created a method in art known as Pointillism. Zahra has used his inspiration to take her own photographs and use dots only to create this artwork.

