

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Friday 21st October 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

We started the school year on Tuesday September 6th with a new Prime Minister, and it looks like we will return, after half-term, to another new one! However, alongside this tumultuous week in politics, it is very reassuring to share with you the many opportunities provided by staff and the successes of our students.

Firstly though, I did want to remind you that the school, and Dorset Council, are committed to helping you access possible sources of support during these difficult times. With the challenging financial climate you may be eligible for **Free School Meals** and/or other benefits, and it is quick and easy to check this on this link: [Apply for free school meals - Dorset Council](#) Additionally, we have a large stock of good quality **second-hand uniform** and can also help to provide access to a healthy breakfast; please do contact us through our office@beaminster.dorset.sch.uk email. The **Beaminster Food Bank** is also available from 10am-12pm on Mondays and Fridays at the Prout Bridge Building.

Our Year 11 students have enjoyed a number of trips this week. The **GCSE Geographers** were able to control the weather during their fieldwork trips to Lyme Regis and Dorchester, whilst the **GCSE Sculpture** students had to work between the showers on their visit to Roche Court Sculpture Park today, finding inspiration for their forthcoming coursework.

The **West Dorset Careers Fair**, on Thursday, was an ideal opportunity for our KS4 and KS5 students to find out more about future careers, both locally and nationally. I am most grateful to the many employers, businesses, Universities and Colleges who made the time to speak with our students and share their career journeys. Many of the students I spoke with have been encouraged to think more widely, and I thank Mr Donovan, and The Sir John Colfox Academy, for putting this important event on.

Students from across Years 7, 8 and 9 attended **The Leadership Academy** at Bryanston on Tuesday. During a very busy day of talks, training and activities they participated in event organisation, coaching programmes, dance and ambassadorial work. This was quickly put into practice on Thursday, when our Year 7 leaders helped to manage the **Primary Futstall tournament**, many thanks to them for a very successful afternoon.

Year 13 have showed a very mature and balanced approach to their first full set of examinations over the past few days, and deserve a welcome half-term break. Meanwhile, we have sent out information for **Year 11** who will be undertaking their **trial examinations** from Tuesday November 15th. A copy of their exam timetable is attached here and can also be found on [Exams - Information and Useful Links | Beaminster School | Beaminster](#) along with lots of other useful exam and revision information

We are all aware that good punctuality and attendance at school are essential for high levels of learning to take place, and for students to gain their best GCSE grades. Research shows that, on average, students with less than 90% attendance attain one grade less than their peers. Therefore, the government are asking all schools to ensure that families are made aware if their child's **attendance drops below 95% each half-term**. We very much appreciate that while there may be compelling reasons for attendance to dip, we are obligated to share this information with you and do genuinely want to work with you if we can help to improve your child's attendance.

Over the past week we have had to have some difficult conversations with students regarding skirt length, style of shoe and amount of jewellery. Please can we ask that all uniform conforms to our **agreed policy** and that students do not return after half-term with bracelets, rings or nose piercings. Attached is some additional **uniform guidance** to help support parents and carers with uniform selection, particularly skirts and shoes, and how students present themselves at school, and more information can also be found on the School Uniform page of the school website: [School Uniform | beaminsterschool](#)

Please can I also remind all parents and carers that students should **not** be picked up from the **bus park between 3.15pm and 3.45pm**. Our friends at Mountjoy are working very hard to keep their traffic moving so that our buses can arrive for a timely pick-up. However, on several occasions, they have had to deal with drivers pulling out and nearly causing an accident. Students are able to stay warm, dry and use our computer facilities in the LRC until they are collected, so there is no need for students to be putting themselves, and others, at risk when they can easily, and safely, wait for 15 minutes.

By the end of October we always aim to provide you with an early indication of how well your child has settled in, their attitudes to learning and the progress that they are making. We have already sent out **reports for Years 10 and 11** and will be following this with Years 7, 8 and 9 straight after half-term, and then Years 12 and 13 by mid-November. Please do also remember that we have our **Academic Monitoring Day on Friday November 11th** when all Tutors will have a 15 minute meeting with their Tutees and their parents / carers during the day; further information about this will be sent out after half-term.

We have a current **staff vacancy for a Science Technician**. Full details are available on the school website and the closing date for applications is Monday 21st November.

Finally, I hope that you can all have some respite from the political shenanigans and enjoy some time with your family.

Mr Hales

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