

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Friday 20th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

The freezing mornings and unexpected snow have made this a challenging week for us all, particularly for those children not able to access the re-routed bus services. However, I am very grateful to First for ensuring that their decisions are communicated early on their social media sites, and to all of you for making every effort to get your child into school; we look forward to more usual service next week! (Please remember that all **student absences** must still be called in daily as usual, including when transport is not running, thank you).

We have had slightly extended assemblies this week so that Mr Withers can reinforce a number of important messages around **safeguarding in school**. The attached document, **Being Safe & Happy Safeguarding Information Powerpoint 2023**, provides you with information on the material that was covered in the assembly and throughout our personal development programme. Please do take some time read it all through and do discuss it with your children, it is also available on the school website.

It was very encouraging to see so many families for the **Year 12 Parents' Evening** on Wednesday, and to make acquaintance with the Sir John Colfox families. We look forward to seeing **Year 8s** at their evening next Wednesday, so do please remember to book your online meeting slots.

On a very crisp evening our Year 10 and 11s played their first **Hockey match** of the year against Wadham. With only a few team practises so far there was some anxiety amongst the players. However, this soon thawed and they all played brilliantly, securing a strong 3 – 0 win. All players and year groups are welcome to join Mrs Lees for **Hockey training** after school on Tuesdays.

Yesterday our **Cross-Country teams** faced their fiercest competition yet at the **Dorset Schools County Championships** in Bournemouth. As one of the few schools able to send all six qualifying teams, we had over 30 runners participating in this prestigious event and, with wintry conditions making the course very challenging, all of the students deserve great credit. The event also acts as the selection process for the South West Championships, so many congratulations to Joe Whelan, who came second, and Tom Green, who was 11th. My thanks to Mr Wagstaff and Mr David for all their support and energy in making this our most successful cross-country squad ever (some photos are on the Facebook page)!

Thank you to all involved in our **non-uniform today** which has raised almost £475 for the Motor Neurone Disease Association, Year 11's chosen charity. Our thanks, also, to the **Dorset Immunisation team** who were in school today administering nearly 200 nasal sprays to protect Year 7, 8 and 9 students against seasonal flu.

We are still chasing up a few **missing forms for Activities Week** so please do get those back to us as soon as you possibly can, reminders have been sent out, and do look out for a ParentMail next week confirming which activity your child is on.

You will also be aware that the **National Education Union (NEU)** will be taking its first day of industrial action on Wednesday 1st February. This action is a decade in the making and is certainly not taken lightly. The ongoing crisis in teacher recruitment and retention has not been addressed by the government, there has been a significant, real terms cut in teachers' pay over this time, and even the current pay award is not being fully funded, at a time when energy bills have tripled and soaring levels of inflation are eating away at all educational budgets.

Please be aware that due to the number of staff involved in this action, we are very likely to open for only a few year groups that day, and have others working from home via remote learning. We will let you know by the middle of next week how we intend to organise the day.

We have our third **Read Aloud Week** starting on Monday where all of Key Stage 3 will be read “The Magician’s Nephew” by C. S. Lewis for about 10 minutes at the start of every lesson. This is all part of our drive to engage students with challenging literature to help increase their vocabulary and cultural literacy, and so that we create a school-based reading community with a culture of reading for pleasure. My thanks to Miss Rollick for organising this exciting event.

We are looking forward to sharing the wonderful mono-prints and collagraph prints that **Year 9** have produced as part of their Natural Forms work this year. There is a **special private viewing** from 5.30pm until 7pm on Monday at the Sou-Sou-West Contemporary Arts Gallery, Symondsburry Estate, Bridport (poster attached). The exhibition will be open to the public all week, from Monday 23rd – Friday 27th January, 10.30am-3.30pm daily, just follow the signs for the car park.

A reminder of our current **staff vacancies** for a **Science Technician** and **part-time Admin Officer** supporting SEN. Full details are available on the school website and Dorset Council website with closing dates at the end of this month so do get your applications in.

Other events to be aware of are the **Apprenticeship Employer Fair and STEM Careers event** at Weymouth College and the Spring half term activities being run at **Prout Bridge**, details of both are attached.

Enjoy your weekend.

Mr Hales
Headteacher

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