

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Ambition • Service • Kindness

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1st March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the first day of Spring and St. David's Day!

There has been much classroom discussion about the non-fiction texts used across all Key Stage 3 classes for our half-termly **Reading Week**. These have ranged from 'The Dancing Plague of 1518' and 'What is an Orbit' to 'Being kind makes you feel Good' and 'The Golden Ratio'; do ask your child how the special mathematical relationship appears in everything from art and nature to science. Thank you to Miss Rollick for putting together this varied and stimulating array of topics as part of our development of oracy.

Over thirty Year 8 students enjoyed a full day of many challenges kindly provided by the **Institute of Engineering and Technology**. Following a carefully constructed brief around ways to monitor either highway maintenance or safety, the students had to design possible solutions, undertake a number of different practical activities and then present their findings to the other teams. Well done to them all for some thoughtful and innovative ideas.

Year 10 GCSE Music students also enjoyed a visit to The Westlands Centre, Yeovil, to see a teaching concert by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. This was an excellent opportunity for students to see and hear professional musicians for themselves, supporting both the coursework and listening elements of the GCSE course.

Well done to all of Year 13 with their **trial examinations** this week. Year 11 start their trial exams next week, but were already busy completing **Geography Fieldwork** in Dorchester and undertaking really important practice **GCSE French speaking examinations**.

Our assemblies, this week, have focused on two recurring themes that are causing significant concerns, and taking up a considerable amount of staff time away from their classroom activities: **Snapchat and Vaping**. I would encourage everyone to have a look at the PowerPoint slides that Mr Withers has shared (attached, and also available on the Safeguarding and Letters Home pages of the school website), and to discuss these with your child. Please do contact your child's Tutor should you have any concerns or know that your child might need some support with these issues.

The **Year 8 Basketball team** have completed the regular season undefeated after overcoming All Saints and Oak Academy in the Tri-Tournament on Tuesday. The team has really showed their dominance in the local area, and we are now looking forward to the play-offs where we will test ourselves against opposition further afield.

Our **Year 11 Netball teams** played Sir John Colfox on Wednesday night with both teams playing with real skill and energy overcoming the opposition 15-8 and 7-6. This was particularly pleasing as many of the girls were being filmed for their GCSE practical skills.

It was a pleasure to welcome **MP, Chris Loder**, to Beaminster School, today, as part of our ongoing education discussions. With so many services under pressure this was an opportunity to remind Chris of the many challenges facing schools and colleges. These include the significant recruitment and retention crisis in the profession, issues around the curriculum and Ofsted, the dearth of support services for schools and, as ever, the consequences of the dire financial settlements for schools over the past decade. With the Spring budget next week, let's hope that he has some influence!

Dorset Council have been notified of an inspection of children and young people with **special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)**, focusing on the impact of their support. Ofsted would like to hear your views about the support that your child receives and how it has helped you and your child. You can provide your views by completing an online survey at the following link before Tuesday 5th March:
[Area SEND inspection for Dorset Local Area Partnership \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](https://smartsurvey.co.uk)

Our best wishes to the Year 8 Intermediate **Youth Speaks Team**, Nina Powell, Efi Fraser and Bea Bibby, who are competing in the District Finals on Saturday 2nd March at Wessex Academy in Cheddar. They have worked incredibly hard and I know that they will be great ambassadors for the school.

Looking ahead, we have **Year 9 Options Evening** on Wednesday 6th March at 6.30pm, when we will be explaining the courses and choices available as students move into Year 10. Year 10 GCSE students have a **Drama performance** at Sir John Colfox on Wednesday afternoon and there is the fun of **World Book Day** on Thursday, with a range of activities planned.

Finally, details of some sports camps running over Easter are attached that may be of interest to some of you, together with information about Bridport Clothes Bank and the latest **cyber safety parent information** sheet, what you need to know about group chats.

Enjoy the weekend.

Mr Hales

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