

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Friday 26th May 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Today has been a welcome break from examinations for all our **GCSE and A2 students**, with the half-way point successfully reached by many. There will still be much work to do over the half-term, but I do hope that the students also find some time to rest, recuperate and enjoy some of the promised sunshine.

Wednesday afternoon saw our final, and very poignant, **Year 11 SRP Base Farewell tea**. After nearly 40 years, this is the last cohort who have been able to take advantage of our unique educational offering following the re-organisation of SEN provision by Dorset Council several years ago. It was lovely to see past staff joining us for this farewell and to share their memories of something very special. As always, the students organised the event, provided refreshments and were a real credit to the school. Our special thanks to parent, Mrs Page, for making the amazing cake (see the photo on our Facebook page) and to Ms Clifford for coordinating it all. Our best wishes go with all the students as they move on to a rich variety of exciting post-16 education courses.

After the very successful Bronze and Silver DofE expeditions last weekend, where over 40 students completed their expeditions, it was with real pride that we heard that former student, John Harris, achieved his **Gold DofE Award** and recently attended Buckingham Palace to be presented with it.

We heard that **Olly Brown**, in Year 11, came 7th in the southern qualifier for the Scoot GB competition which means that he will now go on to take part in the National finals in September. Year 7, **Anna Wheeler**, competed at the Regional Trampoline DMT Finals held in Bath, having worked hard to increase the difficulty of her passes, and completed all four DMT passes with real aplomb, becoming South West Champion for her 13 plus age category. We also have seven of our athletes representing West Dorset at the County finals on 10th June; our congratulations to them all.

Our Year 7 and 8 girls won two of their first **cricket matches** this season, narrowly missing out on the county finals, and the Year 9 and 10 boys couldn't quite repeat their success of last year, losing to Thomas Hardy on Tuesday. However, the Year 9 and 10 girls enjoyed a wonderful evening of **rounders** and after five very competitive games they showed high levels of communication, fielding and some amazing catches to beat four other teams and be crowned U15 Dorset Rounders Champions. Congratulations to everyone involved!

It was a real pleasure to welcome back another former student on Thursday, Hugh Wycherley, who now works for **Little Halstock Joinery**. During a fascinating afternoon, he and his brother spoke to our Year 10 DT students about the very high-end, bespoke furniture and designs that the company produce, along with his journey from that same very Beaminster D&T classroom through to his training and amazing range of experiences over the past few years. Staff and students were hugely impressed, and inspired, by the quality and intricacy of the work the company produces, including some wonderful pieces made by Hugh himself, and students learned a great deal to help them with their forthcoming projects.

A group of 15 Key Stage 3 students spent Wednesday tackling a **Sustainable Transport Challenge** with Mrs Da Costa and Mrs Rychnovsky. They had to plan a journey to an important environmental site, chosen as Kingcombe Meadows, in a sustainable and innovative way. After breaking down the problem, planning the journey and designing several models using different materials, the group split into three teams and will go on to present their ideas at Bath University towards the end of June.

From the middle of June, we have a two week period where all students in Years 7, 8 and 10 will familiarise themselves with taking assessments under examination conditions. Years 8 and 10 are already honing their revision, resilience and independent learning skills, and Mr Barnes kindly ran preparation sessions for all Year 7 classes on Tuesday, including providing students with a booklet with everything that they need to know, so do speak to your child about these.

Following a successful grant application by Mrs Walton and parent, Susy Gaines, to **bees4schools**, we are delighted to have taken delivery of our own beehive and all the equipment needed to start bee keeping at Beaminster School! A new **Bee Keeping Club** will be starting after half term, with 10 spaces available for students in Years 7 and 8, so do watch out for more information about this exciting new project after half term.

In response to requests from both students and parents, we have worked with our uniform supplier, Kitz, and are delighted to have been able to source a manufacturer for **secondary school boys' shorts**. During the warmer summer months we allow some sensible modifications to our usual uniform, such as being able to remove jumpers and wear short sleeve shirts, and have recognised that skirts, rather than trousers, are obviously a cooler option for girls, so we hope that this addition to our summer uniform for boys will be seen as helpful, although it is certainly not compulsory. The usual black socks and shoes must be worn with the new shorts, and please do visit the Kitz website to order this entirely optional new item.

Following many years of outstanding service to Beaminster School, **Mr Randall** will be retiring at the end of the summer term. There will be plenty of time for all of us to celebrate his achievements and huge contribution to the school after half-term but, in the meantime, I do want to share with you the re-structuring that we will be putting in place from September. The role, and the educational needs of our children, has changed considerably over the past 25 years. Therefore, we are strengthening the Senior Leadership of the school and have appointed **Ms C Jones** to lead Learning and Achievement at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9), **Mr J See** to lead Key Stage 4 (Years 10 – 11) and **Mrs S Walters** to lead Key Stage 5 (our Joint Sixth Form). We are very fortunate to have such talent already working within the school and I look forward to sharing more about these roles with you later in the summer term.

I wish you all a very happy half term, under the promised blue skies.

Mr Hales

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