



## **Weekly Parent Bulletin No: 15** **Week Commencing Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026** **Celebrating Student Achievements and Events**

Welcome back to everyone after what we hope was a truly fabulous Christmas break. It has been wonderful to see our students returning this week, looking refreshed and ready to engage with their learning. While the Christmas festivities might already feel like a distant memory, the positive energy and focus the students have brought back with them have made for a brilliant start to the new term.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to two new members of staff Sean Adams who has become a member of the IT Department and Matthew Cockell who has joined the Site Team.

### **Weather Procedures: How We Decide to Open**

As the weather has become increasingly variable lately, many students have been asking about the school's protocol for potential closures. To ensure everyone is informed, I would like to explain the rigorous process we go through each morning when conditions are difficult:

- 5:30am We begin communicating with the bus companies. They send drivers out onto the local routes to assess whether the roads are safe for the school buses.
- Site Assessment: Simultaneously, our site team conducts a thorough walk of the school grounds to ensure that grit and salt have been laid down and that the pathways are safe for staff and students.
- Staff Feasibility: We also have to consider our teaching and support staff, many of whom commute from up to 40 miles away. We assess whether it is safe for them to travel to the Forest.
- The Decision: All this information is collated, and we aim to make a final decision before 7:00am.

If the school is forced to close, we will post the announcement immediately on our official social media channels. If you don't see a post, you can assume we are open as usual.

### **KS4 Options Evening Thursday 15 January**

Our KS4 Options Evening will take place in the Main School from 5pm to 7pm on Thursday 15 January.

This is a vital moment for all Year 9 students as they look forward to their transition to KS4 and beyond. During the evening there will be a brief introduction from Mr Mitchell in the Main Hall. This will start at 5pm so please give yourself plenty of time to get in and settled.

The evening will then have two foci. Firstly being able to get an overview of the core curriculum for KS4 and members of the English, Maths and Science Departments will be around to share their KS4 courses as well as discuss the progress of students in Year 9.

Secondly is the options curriculum. Students, parents/carers have the opportunity meet with subject staff from across all the options subject so that they are in a strong position to make the best choices for the subjects that they will go on to study in KS4.

Thursday will be a very busy evening. We expect every student to attend with their parent/carers and for them to take an active part in making the choices that will affect what they will learn over the next two years.

If you would like to get a head with some reading the Options Booklet is available on the School Website.

For your information here is a copy of the Timeline from the booklet:

### **Year 9 Options' Evening: Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup> 2026, 5:00pm-7:00pm**

This evening will include a talk by Mr Mitchell, as well as the opportunity to meet subject staff in our 'Subject Fair'

### **Deadline for on- line preference forms: Thursday January 29<sup>th</sup> 2026**

Preference forms must be completed using the My Child at School App – a link will be sent out after the Options Evening, please make sure your email address is up to date on MCAS app.

### **Students and Parents/Carers informed of options: Summer Term 2026**

Throughout the process each student will be guided by their Tutor. Each student will meet with their Tutor and have the opportunity to discuss, and ask, specific questions.

### **Forest of Dean Trust Education Conference 2026**

We are thrilled to share the success of our recent Education Conference, held on Monday 5th January 2026 at Dene Magna School. The day brought together educators from across our trust for inspiring workshops, presentations, and lively discussions on various areas, including: evidence-based practice, pensions and wellbeing. Staff left with fresh ideas, practical strategies, and a renewed sense of collaboration.

A huge thank you to all our speakers and presenters - your expertise and insight made the day truly impactful, and we are grateful for your contribution. Thanks also to Caption Catering for our delicious lunch.

We look forward to building on this momentum and continuing to provide opportunities that strengthen teaching and learning across all our schools, including our next annual conference next January. If you would like to present at our next conference on Monday 4th January 2027, or would like to offer presentations as part of our ongoing CPD offer, then please get in touch with Mrs G Meek ([g.meek@fodt.co.uk](mailto:g.meek@fodt.co.uk)).



*“Collaboration between professionals in sessions with shared focus, shared problems and shared solutions”.*

*“The feeling of being valued, and knowing that the trust was prepared to devote a day, and what a day, to further enhance us”.*

## **Corsetry Course**

We held our second corset course day this week, with a small group of Year 10 students taking part. They selected a wonderful range of fabrics, each one unique and reflecting their individual personalities in their corset designs.



The students worked incredibly hard throughout the day, remaining focused and motivated, and achieved an impressive amount in such a short time. We are extremely proud of their dedication and commitment. Well done to everyone involved!"



## **Languages For Life**

On the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> January, we were delighted to welcome students back after the Christmas break with our Languages for Life event for Year 9. The aim of the event was to help students understand the wide-ranging benefits that learning languages can bring, both academically and in future careers. It was a fantastic opportunity to inspire students at an important stage in their language-learning journey.

We were especially lucky to welcome two former Dene Magna students who shared their experiences. Lily James joined us in person and delivered a highly engaging presentation about her language-learning journey. Lily is currently in her final year at the University of Bath, studying International Management and Spanish, and spoke



enthusiastically about spending her third year working in Fuerteventura. We were also joined virtually by Debbie Gardner, who studied GCSE French at Dene Magna. Debbie shared an inspiring insight into her career in the travel industry, explaining how using a variety of languages has supported her roles around the world, including travelling to Japan for the Rugby World Cup. Both speakers showed our students just how powerful and life-changing language learning can be.

We finished the morning with a language-themed quiz, which students thoroughly enjoyed, before

rounding off the event by sharing some delicious French pastries. It was a memorable start to the new term, leaving students motivated and excited about the opportunities that learning languages can offer.

## Science Taster Session

Year 11 Triple Scientists enjoyed a taster session at the sixth form campus at Cinderford participating in two sessions on physics and chemistry. The aim of the session was to give the students a real life taste of life and lessons at the sixth form campus.

In physics the students completed some Fermi problems designed to improve critical thinking and problem solving skills and were set the task of estimating the number of packets of M&M's to make a line 100m long. They moved on to complete a practical task directly linked to the GCSE specification. In chemistry they were given the task of carrying out analysis on a series of unknown chemicals to determine what each sample contained, helping them to build and develop good laboratory skills and problem solving capabilities.

The students enjoyed the sessions carrying out practical activities in our superb facilities in the sixth form gaining a better idea of how Science is delivered and what life is like at the sixth form

## Key Stage 3 Students Take on the UK BEBRAS Challenge

Last term, our Key Stage 3 Computing students took part in the UK BEBRAS Challenge, an international competition that encourages computational thinking and problem-solving. The challenge presents a series of short, engaging puzzles that test logic, pattern recognition and algorithmic thinking—no prior programming knowledge required.

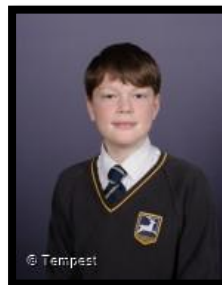


Students approached the challenge with enthusiasm and resilience, applying skills developed in lessons to tackle unfamiliar problems under time pressure. It was fantastic to see them thinking critical and persevering through tricky questions.

Taking part in BEBRAS gave students the opportunity to benchmark their skills against peers across the country and beyond, while building confidence and curiosity in computing. Well done to all who participated for representing the school so positively.

A special congratulation to the following students

- ❖ Hannah H - **Best in School & Year 7 overall winner!**
- ❖ Hugo P - **Overall Year 8 winner**
- ❖ Jacob D - **Overall Year 9 winner**



**Gold Certificate winners:-** Ben H, Oscar E, Poppie P, Elena M, Nathan S, George L, James G, Niamh I, Finley D, Ellie W, Iestyn M, Florence J, Elodie J and Hayden D.

Additional Computing group winners:- Isabel J, Rory W. George J, Alex P, Merci B, and Oliver H



## 6<sup>th</sup> Form Trial Exams

It's always tough to have to come back to school and straight into exams, but Y13's approach to the trials has been exceptional. We use the trial process to identify areas for improvement and to experience the reality of exam logistics. There have been some unexpected challenges to overcome this year: snow, bus cancellations and room changes. Many of the A level exams run for over three hours - a real marathon - and learning how to manage that time has been vital. There is no results 'day', instead, teachers will be going through papers as quickly as possible with the intention of building on what has been learned by the assessment process. The results will be shared with parents in a report format in the first week of February.

## A Music Celebration

We are incredibly proud to share some wonderful news about Freya and her recent musical achievements. Freya has been thoroughly enjoying her Music lessons at DM, alongside additional Electric Guitar and Keyboard tuition, and her enthusiasm for music continues to grow both in and out of school.

Outside of lessons, Freya attends *The Music Works* drop-in sessions, where she explores music production and a wide range of instruments. She has also taken part in the *Music Works Key Changes 1:1 Programme*, which has played a significant role in building her confidence and self-esteem. As a result of her progress, Freya was invited to take part in a filmed project, sharing her musical journey and reflecting on what music means to her - a fantastic recognition of her growth.

Most recently, Freya performed on stage at a Music Works showcase alongside Bella and another student, performing an original song. Bella sang, while Freya played both guitar and drums (the drums were recorded earlier and played on the night). This was a huge personal milestone for Freya, who showed great courage and determination, and she & Bella rightly felt very proud of themselves afterwards.





Freya's journey - supported by collaboration with peers such as Bella - is a wonderful example of how music can inspire confidence, creativity, and self-belief. We are so proud of everything she has achieved and look forward to seeing where her musical journey takes her next.

## Year 11 Mock Interviews

Every Year our Year 11's are given the opportunity to practice their interview skills and meet local employers at our mock interview event which this year will be held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January from 9.00am until 2.00pm.

We are lucky to have secured the services of many volunteers and employers from various sectors, AccXel, Apex Architecture, BAE Systems, Connected Kerb, Dowty (GE Aerospace), DWP, Forest Of Dean District Council, Forest Sports Education, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust, Griffiths Marshall, Hartpury University, Hazelwoods, Hereford Contract Canning, Malvern Special Families, Police, SGS College, STEM Ambassador, The Woodlands Nursery Group, Wesleyan Assurance Company, WPP Enterprise Technology, Wye Valley NHS Trust and would like to extend our thanks to them.

If any parents/carers have interview experience and would like to help out at this event please email our Careers Lead Jo Rich: [j.rich@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:j.rich@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk).

## Post 18 Careers Fair 2026 – 4<sup>th</sup> February from 3pm – 6pm

We hold this event annually at our Sixth Form for our Year 12 and 13 students and usually have approximately 30 exhibitors. Our Year 11's also attend this event during school time and a letter will be sent home with further details shortly.

All students and their parents/carers from any year group are welcome to attend from 3pm - 6pm from both inside and outside the school community. Please help spread the word!

Current confirmed exhibitors are Amazon, Bath Spa University, Boom Satsuma, Bristol School of Acting, CACI, Cardiff University, Crowe LLP, Forest Sports Education, GET, GITEP, Hereford College of Arts (HCA), Institute of Chemical Engineers, University of Exeter, University of Gloucestershire, University of South Wales, University of Worcester and Oxford Brookes

If any local employers would like to attend please email our Careers Lead, Jo Rich: [j.rich@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:j.rich@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk)

**DENE MAGNA CAREERS**  
DREAM BIG AND BE WISE

**DENE MAGNA**  
SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM

**POST-18 CAREERS FAIR**

4<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 3pm - 6pm  
Sixth Form Campus, Cinderford GL14 3FF

Students and their parents/carers are warmly invited to explore prospective career and higher education pathways with a range of exhibitors including higher education providers and regional/national employers in a variety of sectors.

## Girls U13 Football

The U13s played St Peters in the ESFA 9 aside Girls Cup in the first round. St Peters were strong with possession in the first half and went 3-0 up. However, in the second half the DM girls started pressuring and defending the ball better, consequently Molly B scored 2 goals, to make the game 3-2. A strong St Peters team managed to then score 2 more goals making it 5-2.

The girls didn't give up until the end and Molly managed to sneak one more goal in, ending in a Hat Trick! Final score was 5-3.

- ❖ Opposition player of the match was Daisy J.
- ❖ Teacher's players of the match were Molly B and Ellie P.



## RSHE Update

This term the topics we will be studying are:

Year 7 - Conflict Resolution, Healthy Living & Puberty, Substance Misuse

Year 8 - Future Me, Knife Crime, Role Models & Stereotyping, Online Safety

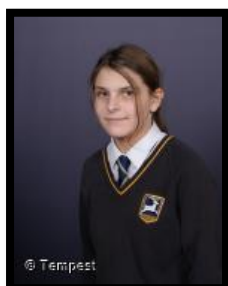
Year 9 - Conflict Resolution, Finance, Fake News, Online Safety

Year 10 - Sexism & Misogyny, Independent Living, County Lines, Peer on Peer Abuse

Year 11 - Independent Living, Fake News, Body Image.

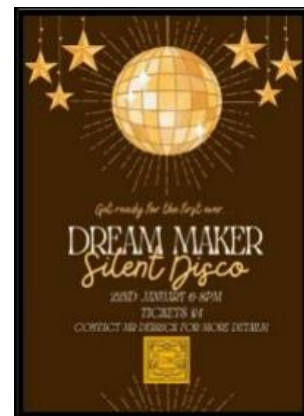
## Celebrating Success

We would like to congratulate Iona M and Soraia F, who were named in the Ruardean Hill "Revels" Indoor Cricket Team, who took on Newent in their first Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation indoor league game of the season.



## Year 7 Dream Makers Silent Disco

Year 7 don't forget your Silent Disco, get your dancing shoes on and start practicing your moves as Mr Derrick will be organising a Silent Disco for all year 7 Dream Makers, to be held on Thursday 22nd January from 6pm until 8pm, tickets cost £4.00 and are available to purchase now via Sco Pay



## Winter Clubs

Please see below the sports clubs that are on offer this term:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Y10</b> Football AU/SA Field</p> <p><b>Y9, 10, 11</b> NETBALL (DH/BJ/MP) Sports Hall</p>	<p><b>Y7 Football</b> AU/PG Field</p> <p><b>Y7 &amp; 8</b> NETBALL (DH/BJ) Sports Hall</p>	<p><b>ALL YEARS</b> GIRLS FOOTBALL (BJ) Field</p> <p><b>Ski Fitness</b> SA Gym</p>	<p><b>Y11 5 a side</b> Football AU/SA Sports Hall</p> <p><b>Y7 Rugby PG</b> Field</p>	<p><b>ALL YEARS</b> GIRLS RUGBY (JDE/LH) Field</p> <p><b>Y7, Y8 &amp; Y9</b> Handball PG Sports Hall</p> <p><b>Y8 Football</b> AU Field</p> <p><b>Y9 Football</b> SA Field</p>

## My Child at School App

Please can we ask that any updates to student's personal information, parents emergency contact details, email addresses and medical conditions be added via the "My Child At School" app

## Outside Achievements

If your son/daughter takes part in any activities outside of school and you would like their achievements published in the weekly bulletin, please send in a small paragraph or two about them and their success and a photo to [reception@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:reception@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk).

## The Dean Theatre Company

Proudly presents the traditional family pantomime Aladdin at Lydney Town Hall on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January and The Larruperz Centre, Ross-On-Wye on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January at 2.00pm and 7.00pm.

Come along and meet Aladdin, Princess Jasmine, the Evil Jafar, Wishee Washy and Widow Twanky.

For more information go to [www.thedeantheatrecompany.com](http://www.thedeantheatrecompany.com).



## Supporting Mental Health

Nature Nurtures is a program at Gloucestershire Wildlife which aims to support young people who are struggling with their mental health. The activities across the 8 weeks focus on improving their confidence and connection to nature. This is a free series of sessions that families can sign up for individually, running in The Forest of Dean.

The sessions begin at the start of February, and places have started book up already so sign up ASAP if you'd like a space!

### Sessions are as follows:

- ❖ Ages 5 to 11 on Wednesdays from 10am to 11.30am, from 3 Feb – 26 March.
- ❖ Ages 5 – 9 on Saturdays from 10am to 11.30am, from 7 Feb – 24 March
- ❖ Ages 10 – 15 on Saturdays from 1pm to 3pm, from 7 Feb – 24 March.



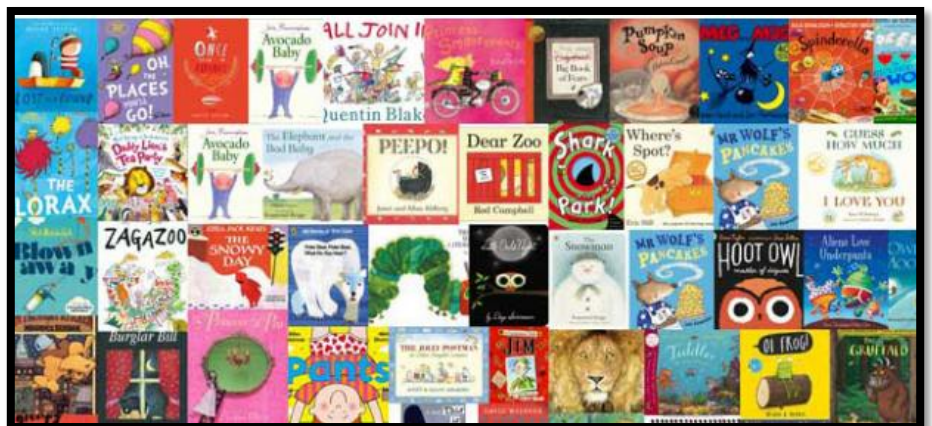
## Artspace Workshop

Artspace are holding a workshop titled "Writing Picture Books for Children" with Fiona Harding on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February from 10.30am until 1.30pm at Artspace, The New Mercury, 3 Woodside Street, Cinderford, GL14 2NL.

We will look at what makes a great picture book, generating ideas, creating great characters, how to plot your story and picture book top tips.

**£40/ \*£30** concessions including materials

\*Concessionary rates are available for those with a disability or who are on means tested benefits.



To book or for more info, follow the link below, call us on **01594 825111** or email [dan@artspacecinderford.org](mailto:dan@artspacecinderford.org)

Book Your Spot on **The Art of Natural Colour' Workshop** with Lizzie Godden on Saturday 7th March, 10:30am – 4:30pm at Artspace, The New Mercury, 3 Woodside St, Cinderford, GL14 2NL

Discover the beautiful art of natural dyeing in this hands-on workshop with Lizzie Godden.



On this one day workshop you'll be able to dye fabric using plant materials. You'll see how we can obtain several colours and a range of tones from one dye bath. We'll go on to overdy previously dyed fabric, and we'll use the exciting technique of shibori to create patterns on our dyed fabric. Shibori refers to creating resist in fabric by, for example, pinching, clamping, wrapping it, before dyeing it, you probably know about tie-dyeing – the creative potential is huge. By the end of the day you'll be really keen to do more!

Cost: £75/ \*£55 concessions including materials

To book email [dan@artspacecinderford.org](mailto:dan@artspacecinderford.org), or call on 01594 825111 or drop into the Artspace building.

Hope you have a good weekend, stay warm.

Declan Mooney  
Headteacher

## Dates For Your Diary

- 09.01.26 – Final Payment for the Ski Trip
- 15.01.26 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Instalment of £200 due for the Berlin Trip
- 15.01.26 – Year 9 Options/Parents Evening
- 16.01.26 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Instalment of £100 due for the Normandy Trip
- 18.01.26 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Instalment of £40 for the Camp Trip
- 29.01.26 – Year 12 Parents Evening
- 03.02.26 – RS Visit to Glos Cathedral & Mosque