



Weekly Parent Bulletin No: 21 Week Commencing Monday 23 February 2026 Celebrating Student Achievements and Events

Message from Mr Mitchell

It is always a pleasure to share exciting news, so please forgive me the indulgence of taking some room in this week's newsletter!

It has been my absolute privilege to be Deputy Headteacher of this wonderful school for nearly 14 years. The time is now right for me to look forward and it is with a real sense of excitement that I have taken the decision to retire as of the end of this year.

Across fourteen years Dene Magna has become a part of my soul. I cannot overstate the value and fondness that the Forest of Dean, our amazing school community and each and every family have in my heart. It has been a pleasure to work with you all. Please be confident that I know that the school is in good hands and will continue to flourish and grow.

I am well aware that we are only half way through the year and there is plenty of work still to do, however I thought that everyone would appreciate the forewarning and be able to make sense of the changes that are going on in preparation for next year.

So, if you see me with a smile on my face, looking forward to summer, you can now understand a little more why!

Inspiring History Teacher Awards 2026

Exciting News, **Miss Adams** has been nominated for the inaugural "*Inspiring History Teaching Awards*".

The Inspiring History Teaching Awards celebrate teachers who make history exciting, inclusive and meaningful, bringing the past to life, sparking curiosity and inspiring students to see the world differently. Created by Historic Royal Palaces and delivered in collaboration with the Historical Association and organisations across the UK, these awards are all about shining a light on amazing teachers.

Below is the nomination.

What makes this person an inspiring teacher of history??

'My history teacher is great because she makes every lesson engaging, meaningful and enjoyable. She brings historical events to life, turning what could be just names and dates into stories about

real people, choices and consequences. Her lessons and discussions makes me feel as though I am really understanding why history is so important and brings text books to life.

She make learning fun by encouraging us to share our opinions, different viewpoints, and ask questions without feeling judged. She also treats every student fairly and with respect, making sure everyone feels heard and supported, no matter their ability level. I struggles with essay writing which can be challenging but I always feel encouraged to keep going, so much so I have applied to study A-Level History.

What I appreciated most is how clearly she explains why history is important. She helps us understand how history influences the present and future and why learning from previous mistakes matters. She has inspired me to keep learning more, and continue my study at 6th form. The Berlin trip was also great'

The school wishes Miss Adams the very best of luck.

Scholars Programme Graduation

We are incredibly proud of our students who travelled to the University of Bristol to celebrate their graduation from the Scholars Programme, run by The Brilliant Club on Tuesday this week.

Over the course of the programme, students completed a challenging university-style course focused on **mental health**. They explored complex topics, engaged with academic research, and developed key skills in critical thinking, independent study, and academic writing. Their hard work culminated in the submission of a final assignment, graded using university marking criteria, which is a fantastic achievement.



The graduation event was a memorable and inspiring experience. Two of our students had the honour of speaking in front of peers and students from other schools. They confidently shared their personal journeys through the programme, reflecting on the challenges they faced, the resilience they developed, and the pride they felt in completing such demanding work. They represented our school brilliantly.

In addition to the ceremony, students took part in a Q&A session with current university students, where they asked insightful questions about university life, studying, accommodation, and managing independence. They also enjoyed a guided tour of the campus, giving them a real insight into what higher education can offer.

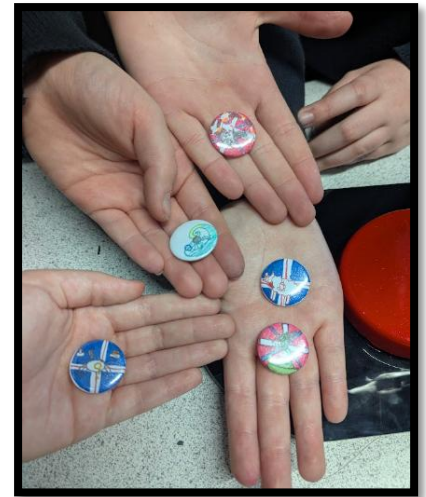
As a result of this experience, all students have gained a broader understanding of university life and increased confidence in their own academic potential. We are extremely proud of their dedication, maturity, and ambition throughout the programme. This achievement marks an important step in their educational journey, and we look forward to seeing what they accomplish next.



Art Club

This week in Art Club, our Year 7 students have been busy creating their very own personalised badges inspired by their individual interests. They thoroughly enjoyed designing and developing their ideas using vibrant, shiny gel pens, experimenting with colour and detail to make their creations stand out.

The finished badges look incredibly professional, a fantastic effort from everyone involved.



Upcoming Art Trips

Year 8 have the opportunity to visit Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, on Friday 5 June, where they will participate in drawing and sketchbook workshops, students have received letters this week and we ask that all those that are interested hand in reply slips at the latest by Thursday 12th March.



Year 7 have the opportunity to visit Nature in Art in Gloucester, on Thursday 21st May where they will be able to participate Batik and lino printing workshops, view the exhibitions in the gallery, visit the sculpture garden and meet the artist in residence. Letters were sent out this week. For all of those that are interested please hand in reply slips to Reception at the latest by Friday 13th March.



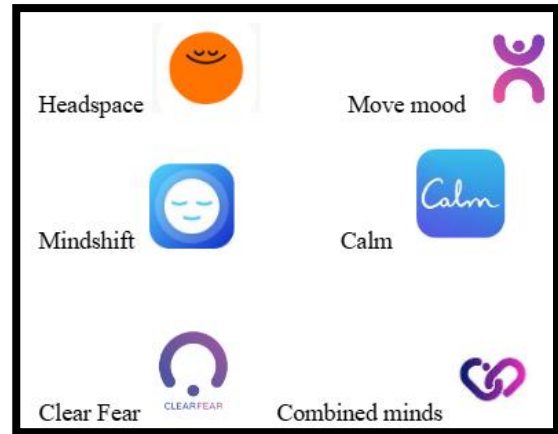
Year 10 Assembly on Managing Worry and Anxiety

Year 10 students attended an assembly on Thursday delivered by Laura Kirby from Young Minds Matter.

The assembly focused on managing anxiety and worry and explored practical strategies to help students recognise signs of stress, challenge unhelpful thinking patterns, and use simple techniques such as controlled breathing and positive self-talk.

Students were reminded that experiencing worry is normal and that support is always available in school. The following apps were recommended:

- Headspace4
- Move Mood
- Mindshift
- Calm
- Clear Fear
- Combined Minds



Sporting Update

Two Year 7 boys Football teams journeyed to Newent last night, Thursday 26.02.26.

Both teams played extremely well, dominating possession and created many chances. Unfortunately the strong play didn't help the overall results as some chances were missed, Year 7 A Team lost 2-1, which Year 7 B Team drew 1-1.



U14s Girls EDF Cup

As you are aware the U14s Girls Rugby Team have progressed to the EDF Finals day to be held at Kingsholm on Thursday 23rd April.

Dene Magna will play Ribston Hall at 3.45pm in the first of two semi-finals, the final will be played at 6.00pm.

The girls would love your support from the side lines. Mr Mooney has said that any student wishing to watch can be picked up from 3.00pm from Reception. Please can parents ring reception stating name of student being picked up.

We will let you know further information when we receive it, so keep a watchful eye on the newsletter.

Over the next couple of weeks leading up to the game we are going to introduce to you all the girls that are going to lift the cup!!

Lexie C

"I went along to rugby training with my friend and ever since then I've stayed, I think I'm hooked. I play number 8 because I really enjoy making big hits and running a lot, I also kick for Drybrook RFC. I am inspired by Mo Hunt because of seeing how far she has come, shows that one day I can hopefully reach her level. I am extremely excited to play at Kingsholm because I know it's going to be an amazing experience. I am a bit nervous but I'm mainly excited. My favourite thing about rugby is definitely all the contact, but I do love the team work that comes with it and getting involved and the opportunities that playing rugby gives like playing at Kingsholm."



Kyriee C

'I was encouraged to get into rugby by my family and friends. The position I play is 13 or 15, centre or fullback. My inspiration is Ellie Kildunne because of her speed and how she plays. I am feeling a bit nervous but very excited to be playing at Kingsholm. I love everything about playing rugby, also making new friends but especially scoring tries'.



Boe H

'My mum persuaded me to start playing rugby at a very young age as she had played. The position I play is fly half. I am inspired by Mo Hunt because the way she plays and her knowledge of the game. I am feeling very good about playing at Kingsholm, I am very excited but it is a lot of pressure. I love playing rugby especially the team environment and fun it is playing as part of a team'.



Exciting Literacy News

Tutor Reading Programme:

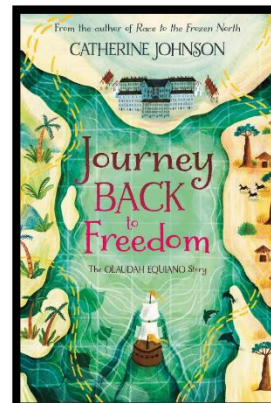
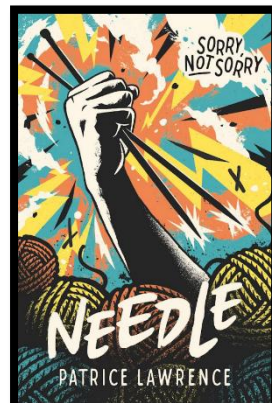
We have seen success in our Tutor Reading Programme with many tutor groups already onto their second (and third) book of the year. As a teacher reads to their tutor group, students are developing greater vocabulary and comprehension through a variety of interesting texts that expand their worldview and improve their literacy.

8W1 and Miss Morris are reading 'The Good Thieves' by Katherine Rundell. Set in New York during the 1920s the book features a great cast of characters led by Vita Marlowe - newly arrived from England and determined to reclaim the family home which has been stolen from her grandfather. Each character brings something to a rather unique team but it is not clear how on earth a group of children may be able to prise a castle away from the mob.



Staff Book Club:

On Tuesday we had our Staff Book Club members discuss 'Needle' by Patrice Lawrence, a short story about the importance of belonging and empathy in difficult circumstances. We are looking forward to reading two more short stories from Barrington Stoke; 'Welcome to Trashland' based on the impact of e-waste and 'Journey Back to Freedom, the true story of Olaudah Equiano', a child sold into slavery. Copies of all three books can be found in a dyslexia-friendly format in our school library.



World Book Day Final Reminders:

With World Book Day on Thursday 5th March, we wanted to give you a last few reminders to help make the day a real celebration of reading:

- Book donations for the book sale need to be delivered to the library. The books will be on sale on Thursday in the main school for 50p and we hope up at the Sixth Form shortly after this.
- Costumes on the day need to be a recognisable book character with the costume noticeably different from a student's normal clothing: this is not non-uniform and no muggles or generic characters are recognisable.
- Book bingo cards are still available in the library.
- Book tokens are valid until 15th March in participating retailers.

World Book Day

5th March 2026

From now on:

- Donate any books for the book sale to the library
- Plan out your costume and bring in a donation (suggested £1)*
- Pick up a book bingo sheet from the library

During the week:

- Complete the form quiz

*Remember all costumes must be of a recognisable character and different from non-uniform. Costumes judged to be non-uniform will result in a detention.

On the day:

- Book sale in the library at break and lunch (50p a book)
- Costume competition in the library at lunch

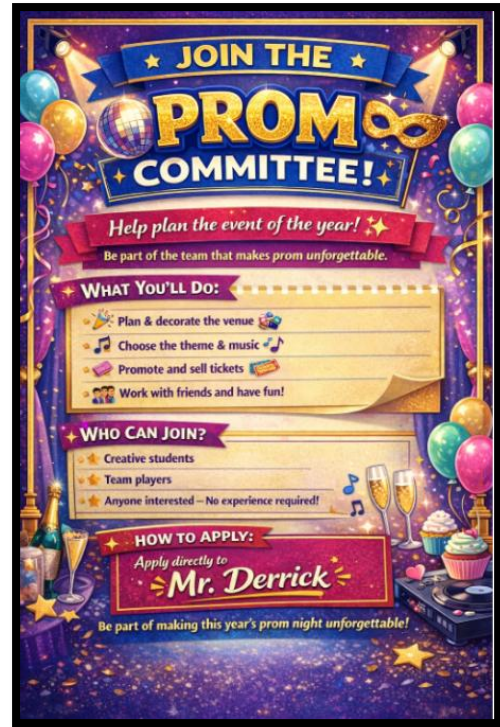
By the end of the day hand in:

- Form quiz (online)**
- Bingo sheet**
- Muddle solution**

****Prizes awarded on Friday**

Year 10 Committees

Mr Derrick is launching Prom and Year Book Committees for the current Year 10. If any Year 10 would like to be part of either or both of these committees and be part of the decision making, please apply by Friday 6th March by sending an email to Mr Derrick, or speak to him in person.



Dream Makers Award's Evening

We would like to invite all Year 7 students to attend the inaugural Dream Maker Awards to be held on Thursday 9th July from 6pm until 8pm. This is a celebration of the first year of Dream Makers and the successes of the programme. There will be something for everyone and special awards given out for exceptional performance across the year to both staff and students!

Due to venue constraints, only one adult will be able to attend with each student.

Please RSVP to Mr Derrick if you are able to attend and who is coming,
dreammakers@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk.
Dress code is smart.



School Production 2026

Be Our Guest! Dene Magna Proudly Presents...

Dene Magna is thrilled to announce that our school production for 2026 will be Disney's *Beauty and the Beast Jr.*! This magical tale of love, transformation and enchantment will be brought to life by our talented students from **Wednesday 9th – Friday 11th December 2026**.

Don't Believe Me? Ask the Dishes!

Auditions are now open! Students interested in performing can sign up in the Drama Studio.

Save the Date - Pop the dates in your diary now! We've got high hopes for this production, and we can't wait to see you there!

This year, we are officially offering our wonderful creative students a chance to dive into production for this year's school play! Stagebound is a great opportunity to be hands-on, creating all things theatrical. Club starts after half term (Thursday, 26th February).

To help our students build beautiful sets, props, and costumes without breaking the drama department's budget; we are looking for donations of "upcyclable" materials. If you have any of the following items gathering dust in your garage or craft room, we would love to take them off your hands

- Paint & Supplies: Interior paint (half-cans are fine!), acrylics, spray paint, brushes, rollers, or drop cloths.
- Fabric & Notions: Large fabric scraps, old curtains, duvet covers (clean), table cloths, ribbons, buttons, lace, thread, and anything golden.
- Hardware: Sandpaper, wood glue, polystyrene, furniture foam, large cardboard sections, or painters'/duct tape.

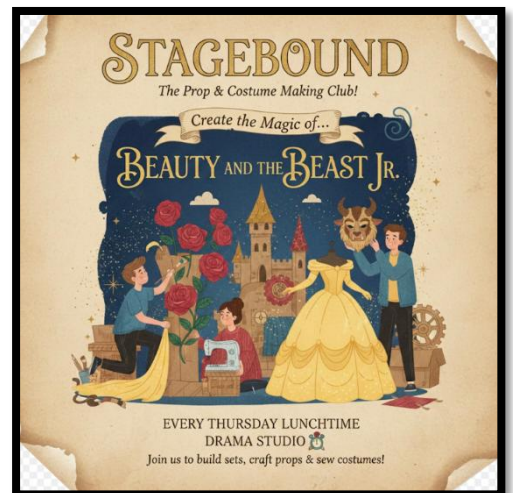
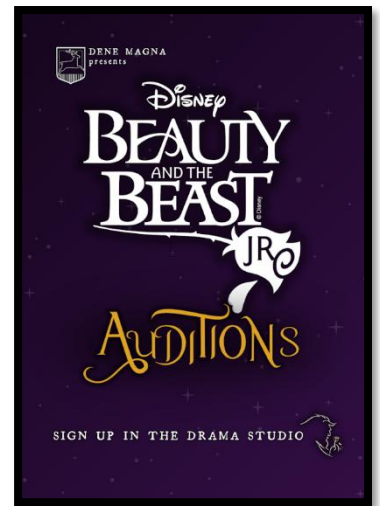
A Note on Quality: While we love a good DIY project, please ensure all donated fabrics are clean and dry. Paint cans are properly sealed and not dried out.

Please bring donations to the Front Office labelled "Stagebound club".

Your support directly impacts the "magic" our students see on stage.

Year 10 Punctuality

Mr Derrick will be monitoring Year 10 students punctuality to lessons, those that are late to lesson will incur a detention either at break, lunchtime or after school.

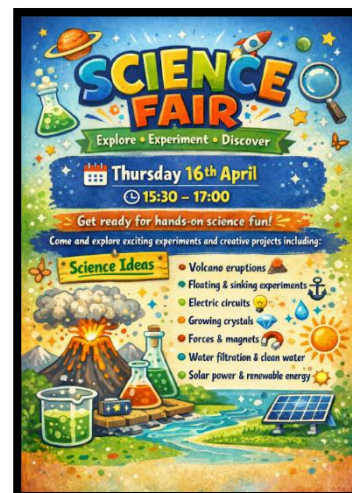


Science Fair

Year 7 and year 8 will be taking part in a Science fair competition before half term.

The students will use their own curiosity to develop an experiment to present to the class and winners will present to parents/carers after school on April Thursday 16th April from 15:30pm - 17:00pm.

The Science teachers are excited to see what ideas and creations the students have.



Year 11 Core Trial Exams

Year 11 will set trial core exams in English, Maths and Science, below is a copy of the timetable.

Date	Time	Subject
Monday - 02.03.26	AM	English Literature
	PM	Combined Science & Triple Science
Tuesday 03.03.26	AM	English Language
	PM	Combined Science & Triple Science
Wednesday 04.03.26	PM	Maths Paper 1 Non Calc (Non enrichment students)
Thursday 05.03.26	AM	Combined Science & Triple Science
	PM	Maths Calculator paper 2 & Medical Science BTEC Yr 12
Friday 06.02.26	AM	Maths Calculator Paper 3
	PM	Maths Paper 1 Non Calc (Enrichment students)

Celebrating Success

Congratulations to **Mirren B** who has been successful in securing a place on the Scotland Rugby League U14/16s Development Programme. Mirren has worked so hard for this opportunity, and it means the world to see her efforts recognised at an international level. The program will start in Hawick over the Easter weekend, which she is hugely excited about. Drybrook RFC are also incredibly proud of her and have spoken about her continuing their strong tradition of players achieving international honours and, as parents, we couldn't be prouder of her efforts. .



We are delighted to share that **Livvy R** was selected to take part in a three-day course with Falmouth University over the half-term holiday.

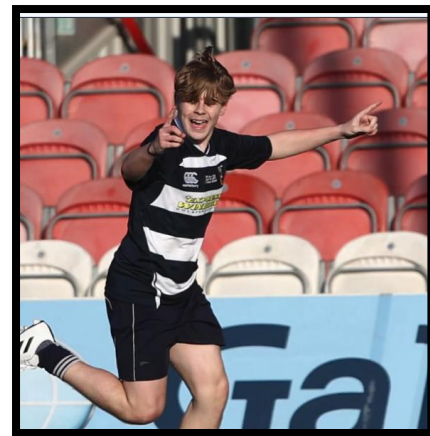
During the course, Livvy attended a series of specialist workshops where she developed her skills in drawing hands, designing characters, refining her creative concepts, and constructing realistic faces, beginning with an understanding of the underlying skeletal structure and then developing to add the facial features.



Having successfully completed the programme and produced an outstanding body of work, Livvy has been awarded an unconditional offer for the highly sought-after Foundation course upon completion of her A Levels.

A fantastic achievement. Well done, Livvy!

A big round of applause to **Ollie E**, who during half term, participated in the South West of England Rugby trials at Dings in Bristol. Ollie has selected out of approximate 200 players to represent the South West in up and coming fixtures. Great work.



A big shout out to **Tyler G, Ollie E, Ollie AW, Tyler C, Troy T, Joel L, Harley G, Obi DC, Owen M and Sam M**, who are all members of Cinderford U15 rugby team, who took on Drybook U15s in a forest derby. On a cold and wet night the boys certainly brought the heat. With a full and noisy stand the rugby from both sides was a great advert for forest rugby.

Tries from Owen M, Troy, Tyler C x3, Ollie E x2 & Ollie AW saw an outstanding display by the home team. Man of the match was given to Tyler C.



Celebrating Staff Success

The Dene Magna community would like to congratulate our own Ellie Rugman (previously Underwood) for receiving an award for the first player in Gloucester Hartpury club history to hit one hundred caps back in 2023.

Ellie was one of players who participated in the first winning final of the PWR for Gloucester-Hartpury held at Queensholm.

She was presented with a framed shirt for this achievement at a club evening last night.



6th Form Updates

Bake Sale

On Thursday 5th March there will be a Bake Sale, raising money for 6th Form.

It will take place in the main school hall at break time. Please don't forget to bring some cash - we hope to see you all there!

Year 13 Photos

A reminder to Y13 Students - photos will take place on Wednesday 5th March at the main school from 09:00am.

If any students require a lift over from the Cinderford Campus, they'll need to let the 6th Form Office know ahead of time -there are limited seats on the minibus.

Year 13 Parents Evening

The Year 13 Parents Evening will be held at the 6th Form Campus on Thursday 5th March between 4-7pm.

Parents can book appointments via the My Child At School App.

Your 6th Form Needs You - We are hoping for some donations from families for our Easter Hamper raffle, we are looking for chocolate eggs, sweets, bakes, Easter decorations etc. Please drop off any donations to the 6th Form Office by Wednesday 6th March. Funds raised will go directly towards supporting our 6th Form and pupils

Year 13 Assembly - Friday 6th March

Assembly with Miss Adams about Gap Year options post 6th Form - to be held in the Touchdown at 11:30.

Forest of Dean Youth Parliament - Session Two

Sixth Form politics students attended the second session of the Forest of Dean Youth Parliament in partnership with other Forest schools, and facilitated by Matt Bishop MP. Hosted by Dean Academy this time, they were taught about how debates run in the House of Commons and the correct etiquette to follow when addressing fellow members. They then practiced what they had learnt by debating whether voting should be made compulsory or suffer a £200 fine. After a very polite start, they finally got into the swing of interrupting each other, shouting, cheering and booing...just like they do in real life! Our students were passionate in their arguments, showing off their political knowledge very well. They then split back into government and opposition to scrutinise the main bill on AI that will be debated at the final session. We are now looking forward to hosting the next session on Friday 6th March, and welcoming Matt and his team, as well as other Forest of Dean students and teachers to our school.





Latest Edition of The DM Student Standard - Now Available!

We are excited to share the latest edition of The DM Student Standard, a magazine created by our talented Sixth Form students.

This edition offers insights into Sixth Form life, student experiences and much more.

You can read it

here: https://www.canva.com/design/DAHCH96G1Xw/zzFyWFgl3gYMAfsZvtf4Sg/view?utm_content=DAHCH96G1Xw&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniquelinks&utlId=hf9b5f1c313

We hope you enjoy the student's hard work and creativity.

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.

SEN/PP Year 5 Open Morning

Our SEN/PP Department will be holding a Year 5 Open Morning on Tuesday 24th March from 9.00am until 11.00am. This is an opportunity to tour the school and meeting the SEN team.

For more information please email sen@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk or ring 01594



RSHE Update

This term the topics we will be studying are:

- ❖ Year 7 - Substance Misuse, Online Safety, 7 Senses, Intentional Stillness & Sleep.
- ❖ Year 8 - Online Safety, Sexting, Understanding Periods, Sustainability.
- ❖ Year 9 - Online Safety, Hate Crime, Equality & Diversity, Health Checks.
- ❖ Year 10 - Peer on Peer Abuse, Laws around Pornography, FGM & Forced Marriage, Coercive Control.
- ❖ Year 11 - Body Image, Healthy Relationships, Sexual Health, Pornography - laws around revenge porn.

If you would like support in discussing any of these topics at home, please visit the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning website. <https://www.ghll.org.uk/advice-for-parents-exams-money-parents-helpline/>

Deepfake Networking Event for Students - Cheltenham - 5th March 2026

Cyber Runway delivered by Plexal, supported by CyNam and CyberFirst Southwest is hosting an event in Cheltenham for 15-18-year-olds at Hub8 MX, in the heart of Cheltenham's cyber and tech ecosystem on 5 March.

At this event we will explore how we can protect ourselves and be more aware of deep fakes, online harms and scams!

If you know any interested students in years 11-13 who might like to attend, (parents also welcome), get them to sign up on Eventbrite or email cyberrunway@plexal.com with any questions.

The event features a deep fake detection exercise from start-up company Datambit and we will hear also from the amazing Simeon Quarrie from Vivida who will discuss being on the forefront of battling deepfakes and related harms.

There will be plenty of time for discussion and there is even pizza!

Why should students attend?

- Becoming more aware of scams and why this is important for your online safety and how it relates to future jobs and employment.
- Opportunity to meet some incredible businesses and network, building confidence and industry connections.
- For students interested in entrepreneurship, it is a great opportunity to learn what it takes to be part of a start-up solving important challenges.

Apprenticeship Roadshow at AccXel Construction School

The event will take place on Tuesday, March 10 running from 5pm to 7.15pm at Whimsey Industrial Estate, Steam Mills Rd, Cinderford GL14 3JA. The roadshow is open to students, parents and anyone considering a career change, with advisers on hand to explain how apprenticeships work and what support is available.



AccXel Construction School is the UK's first industry-created and industry-led private training provider, designed by employers to meet the changing needs of the construction sector. The roadshow will showcase how its apprenticeships are tailored to give learners both practical skills and wider life experience.

Internship Launch Pack

Odyssey Teaching School Hub is delighted to be offering the government teaching internships programme in the summer, and your family and friends could be eligible.

If you are or know a super curious undergrad or Masters' students in one of the following subjects, and they'd like to spend time in school to discover more about life as a teacher, this could be the internship for you and them!

To be eligible you must be studying one of the following subjects (or something very closely related):

- Maths
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Computing
- Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish) or
- Design Technology



During the 3 week programme, you'll experience a structured programme to gain a real experience of teaching, including the chance to shadow teachers, plan lessons and coach students, visit other local schools, and receive career guidance on how to enter the teaching profession along with true stories of how a teaching career can progress.

And not only that, the interns also receive £455 per week for coming!

The programme will start on Monday 8th June 2025 – Friday 26th June and is open to 2nd year students (or above) undergraduates (of the above subjects) who are interested in a career in teaching, not just our school alumni, so if you know anyone, please spread the word!

If you'd like to find out more, see the website here or email admin@odysseytsh.org

Higher level Apprenticeship roles in Cyber at the University of Gloucestershire with Sept 2026 start

The University of Gloucestershire are holding a Cyber and Digital Learner event on Wednesday 18th March 2026 from 16.30pm – 18.30pm at Park Campus

Launchpad session on 18th March will help Learners understand if it's the right opportunity for them. Sophie Burch our Lead is happy to visit or organise a Teams call. It is certainly a wonderful opportunity for the right candidates to go straight into an exciting career and learn while they earn.

CYBER AND DIGITAL LAUNCHPAD 2026



SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME AND REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THE LEARNER EVENT

18 MARCH 2026 | 16.30-18.30 | PARK CAMPUS

glos.ac.uk/launchpad

Art Space Workshops

Ariel Workshop For Adults and Families

Artspace invite you to our FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OPEN MORNING where they are offering 2 fantastic AERIAL WORKSHOPS, including warm-up sessions and introductions to static trapeze, aerial hammock, and aerial hoop, being held on Saturday 14th March

Whether you're a beginner or just curious, come explore the amazing world of aerial arts!

- Aerial Workshop 1 – 10.00am – 11.30am
- Aerial Workshop 2 – 12.00am – 1.30pm

At Artspace Cinderford, The New Mercury, 3 Woodside Street, Cinderford, GL14 2NL

£5 per person. Booking for aerial workshops essential.

To book or for more info, use the links below, call 01594 825111 or email circus@artspacecinderford.org



Discover Creativity: Join Our Community Threads Social Group

Due to overwhelming demand and the incredible success of our previous Community Threads course, we're excited to announce that we're running another 4 week course!



Hosted by experienced artists, this is the perfect place to bring your own textiles and crafting projects, or get involved in our exciting Arts Trail. Use our facilities and materials to bring your ideas to life! Plus, enjoy refreshments while you create and connect with fellow art lovers! All skill levels welcome — let's make, share, and inspire together!

MONDAYS – STARTS 23RD FEBRUARY for 4 weeks / 10am – 12pm at Artspace Cinderford, The New Mercury, 3 Woodside St, Cinderford, GL14 2NL. £5 PER WEEK or £18 for 4 weeks

To book, follow the link below, call 01594 825111 or email dan@artspacecinderford.org

First week back has been very busy, so have a restful weekend.

Declan Mooney
Headteacher

Dates For Your Diary

01.03.26 – Final Instalment of £100.00 for the Barcelona Trip
01.03.26 – 8th Instalment of £200.00 for the Okinawa Trip
Week Commencing Monday 02.3.26 – Year 11 Core Trial Exams
03.03.26 – Boys Y7 Football v Forest High (h)
04.03.26 – Year 11 & 13 Photos
05/03/26 – World Book Day
05/03/26 - Boys Y10 Football v Newent (a)
05.03.26 – World Book Day
05.03.26 – Year 13 Parents Evening
11.03.26 – Famelab Final @ Tewkesbury
12.03.26 – 3rd Instalment of £200.00 for the Berlin Trip
13.03.26 – Year 11 Netball Tour Leaves
19.03.26 – Year Parents Evening