

## School Development Plan Update December 2023

A reminder that our school strategic priorities can be found here:

<https://www.dhsb.org/school-strategic-priorities>

An overview of our current school development plan and updates on previous plans can be found here:

<https://www.dhsb.org/sdp-update>

### **1 Students achieve their highest academic potential**

#### **Expectations for excellence in the classroom and outside the classroom**

##### **Excellent Work**

We continue to publish Excellent Work in the Head's Blog each week to show the diversity and excellence of what students are doing. The example below is from October.

One of DHSB's newest lunch time clubs has started the year with nine students from Years 10 and 11 being accepted onto the University of Oxford's COMPOS Programme. The mission of COMPOS (Comprehensive Oxford Mathematics and Physics Online School) is to help enthusiastic school students to systematically learn Mathematics and Physics at a deep level by offering them free tuition and mentoring.

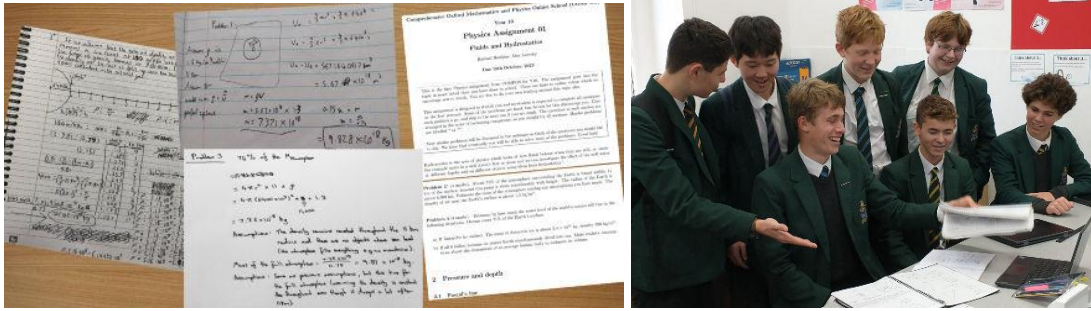
The group who meet for discussion and mutual support are certainly enthusiastic, accepting a large additional 'homework' in Physics and Maths every fortnight, which presents GCSE material at a higher and deeper level than DHSB students commonly encounter in class. To be accepted onto the programme, the students had to pass the first assignment which included problems in Hydrostatics and Quadratic Functions.

There is a large overlap between our COMPOS group and next summer's two DHSB Physics trips to Geneva and CERN, with the younger students' Further Physics Club running alongside our long established Sixth Form Physics Society. We are looking forward to an exciting programme of student led seminars on Particle Physics over the coming months.

Students accepted onto the COMPOS programme are Luke Madgett, Ben Wotton, Caleb Caleshu, Iwan Sanders, Jonah Crawford, Otto Malm, Robert Huang, Thomas de Wilde, Jack Chen.

Well done to them all.

[Link to more information](#)



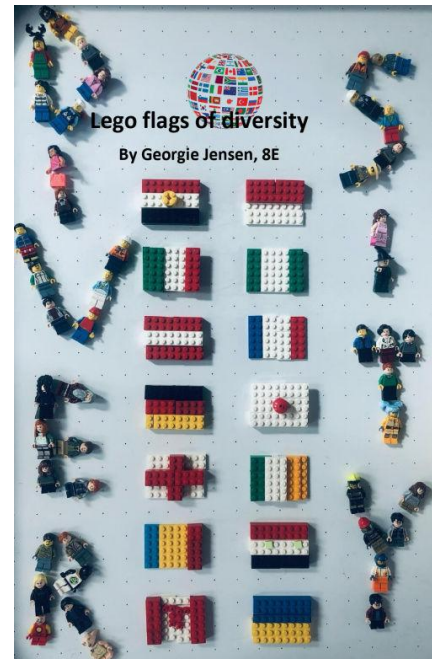
## Writing

This half term, Year 8 English students have been reading a selection of short stories that celebrate diversity, and experiencing a wide variety of sophisticated narrative writing techniques. For their homework, students were tasked with creating a project that reflected the stories, the theme of diversity or the short story genre.

Here are a few examples of their brilliant work.



**Edward Lee 8P**



**Georgie Jensen 8E**



**Andrew Banciu 8E**

[Read more at this link](#)

### My Diversity Photograph (Creative Task 1)

I thought that my colouring pens represented diversity because it shows the variety between the colours and shades.

This could also be seen as a symbolization of something more than pens for example people and how difference can be good and shows how many types of people there are in the community.

They may have dissimilar cultures and do things unlike other people just how each pen draws a different colour each time whether it is similar or not but it is still important we respect them



**Freddie Wilkinson 8E**

[Read more at this link](#)

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## **3 Embracing inclusion and diversity**

### **Celebrating success**

In September we were delighted to have our annual speech day. This was a brilliant opportunity to celebrate student achievements and an opportunity to present awards from the last academic year.

In the afternoon we welcomed our current students and their families and later in the day we enjoyed the company of our Year 13 leavers with time to catch-up over a buffet supper.



Many thanks to recent alumni, Charlie Crichton, Jack Henniker, James Henniker and Tom Trace who returned to school to share their experiences and pathways since leaving DHSB.

They were able to pass on some useful advice too.

Mackenzie Pike, spoke about his time as School Captain and we enjoyed music performed by Ben Wotton 11C, Graham Butler 9P, Ethan Hale 11N, Dylan Lyndsley-Leake 11S, Alex Boghian 9N and Evelyn Wilkinson 12TJK.



Afternoon guests enjoyed canapes created by students with the support of Miss Hunns and Mrs Dean.



## St Levan Shield

Speech Day also saw the culmination of the 2022/23 House competitions where the House Captains proudly enjoyed the presentation of awards to students for all manner of endeavours this year.

We revealed the winners of the four main House competitions which run all year. All the House Captains have worked hard this year to develop their House ethos and this has centred around promoting good conduct, high academic standards, participation in competitions, both sporting and academic and charitable endeavours, raising over £3,000 for House charities. All of these have earned House Points.

All six Houses showed strengths but the House which took home the coveted St Levan Shield for the second consecutive year was Smeaton. They also won the Community Cup and Merit Shield with Priestley winning the Competitions Cup.

This has been my first year as Head of Houses and I have been honoured and proud to have worked with such a dedicated and hard working team of House Captains. Well done to all of you.

Miss Cunningham



## Remembrance

Mr Berryman presented our Remembrance Assembly. He said, "It is vital that as a school community we understand the sacrifices made by service personnel to give us our freedoms today, especially in the context of current conflicts happening around the world".

The assembly also focused on the reality of war and how it draws everybody from any religion and background. War does not directly discriminate nor does it solve the issues which started the conflicts. As last month was Black History Month Mr Berryman wanted to celebrate and inform our students of the BWIR (British West Indies Regiment) who volunteered to fight in World War 1.

During the assembly our students were given time to reflect on what remembrance means to them. Members of our school community read the names on the DHSB Roll of Honour before a minute silence.

A special thanks to Jack Benzie for playing the last post and to Noah Evans and George Cleeland-Smith for recording, editing and publishing the assembly.

<https://youtu.be/nUwQSoFpXUs>

In addition to our remembrance assembly, Mr Riggs has shared this example of Excellent Work written by one of his Year 9 History students, Josh Barnes-Smith 9C. Josh has written a story about World War 1. Mr Riggs was very impressed with his work and thought it would be appropriate to include in our Head's Blog today. Thank you Josh.

## The Lone Soldier by Josh Barnes-Smith

Imagine seeing your friends die, imagine your ears being deafened by explosions, imagine the fear every time you hear rumbling or a whistle blowing. Well, this was my life two years ago in the summer of 1918. My name is Billy Bridges. I'm in the second infantry regiment. We're going over the top tomorrow along with tanks and planes to take the Hindenburg line and chase Fritz back to Berlin. Fritz has been falling back for a few weeks now, but they have left mines and traps along the way. The other day a tank came out of the trees but luckily our tanks got it before it could take a shot. I feel like Fritz is taking us into a barrel and we're a bunch of fish. Danger. That's all I feel.

We're chasing them without any knowledge of why they are retreating for or how much further away they are. We are in trucks, on tanks or horses and some are marching. Either way the commanders will send us in to see what is happening rather than using reconnaissance balloons and aircraft and waste the lives of men.

[Read more at this link](#)

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## 4 Leadership and communities

**All students get diverse cultural experiences. Create a DHSB Arts Award to encourage engagement with extra capacity for creative performance and clubs**

### **Plymouth Symphony Orchestra**

We were delighted to welcome the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra to the school in October, a first for both the school and the orchestra. Our students were awed with dazzling renditions of film music from Star Wars, Gladiator, Schindler's List, Jurassic Park and 633 Squadron as part of the orchestra's drive to encourage young people to experience music of all forms and then hopefully to get involved in the creative arts themselves.

And our own students Max Chapman, Tristan de Rochefort-Roper and Joe Smith were key players in the orchestra.

This is the latest step in a growing collaboration between PSO and DHSB that has seen members of the orchestra working with students in our own musical ensembles, as well as encouraging young people to attend live concerts by sponsoring free tickets to PSO concerts for school-age students.

Thanks to Anne Kimber, the orchestra's conductor, and all the orchestra members who took time off work to give the students this wonderful experience.



## Arts - extra capacity for creative performance and clubs

The Edgcumbe Theatre is now home to the PQA - a theatre school for students training in the arts. There are two schools running - Friday night 5:00pm - 8:00pm and Saturday 10:00am - 1:00pm, offering high quality provision in Drama, Comedy, TV and Film and Musical Theatre for ages 5 - 18.



## Embedding and enhancing the extensive leadership opportunities for students with a focus on raising the ambition of younger students to become active citizens and problem solvers

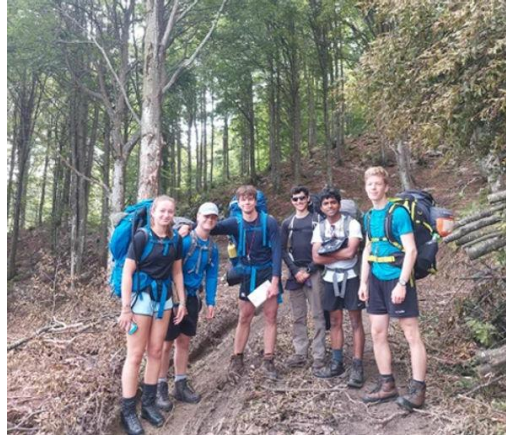
Our Gold Duke of Edinburgh participants successfully took part in their expeditions during the summer holidays. We had teams walking in the Slovenia Alps, walking in Bannau Brycheiniog, or canoeing in the Wye Valley. All participants battled tricky weather conditions but completed successfully and were a credit to the school. Congratulations to them all!

Mrs Wills has taken over as the new DofE manager and questions about DofE can be directed by email to [dofe@dhsb.org](mailto:dofe@dhsb.org).

You can find more information on a brand new website which is a great resource to help pupils make the most of the opportunities that DofE provides. Please also follow @dofe\_DHSB on X (Twitter) for updates.

Certificates will be presented to those participants who completed their award earlier this year very soon, more detail to follow.

[Link to DofE Site](#)



### Summer Heroes Challenge

Over the summer, Year 7 students were busy participating in the DHSB Summer Heroes Project, launched by Mackenzie Pike, School Captain, and Miss Cunningham, Head of Houses.

Four students particularly shined, with Georgie Jensen 8E, Oliver Elford 8P, Andrew Banciu 8E and Rowan Shilling 8E all completing certain challenges, with special congratulations to Georgie, Oliver and Andrew who completed at least five or more of the six challenges.

These required completion of a variety of tasks, varying from undertaking a beach clean in their local community to baking a delicious meal.

Mackenzie said, "I am continually amazed by the talent of the younger members of our school and I am proud to have witnessed some incredible work".





## Junior Prefects

In September we saw the appointment of twelve new Junior Prefects. Students from Year 10 will now be taking on roles and responsibilities during the regular school week and also supporting our Senior Prefect team with whole school events and occasions.

Congratulations to the new team: Bobby Li, Evan Lilley, Harry McCulloch, Max Phillips, Henry Salisbury, Jay Fox Hopwood, Rohan Linden, Agsheyvan Praveenthan, Alejandro Proctor Montano, Zak Lewis-Watson, Ben Urbans and Jianyu Wang. We look forward to seeing your leadership skills develop over the year.



## A New School Captain

Eden Hingston<sup>12ESM</sup> accepted the post and I am sure she will be very successful in her new leadership role. Mackenzie Pike will provide support in a handover period during the next few weeks and later this term there will be time to thank him for his extensive contribution to the life of the school community.

Mackenzie said, "Eden strongly impressed us all throughout the application process and I'm sure she will excel in the role of School Captain. I look forward to working with Eden in the weeks to come".



## House Captains

November saw the formal appointment and very first meeting of the 2023/24 House Captains. The House Captains have hit the ground running with one of their first tasks being to select the House Charities for the year. They will be liaising with their house form groups so students should keep an eye on their email for voting forms! They have demonstrated a lot of enthusiasm already within their Captaincy teams and I am really looking forward to working with them this year.

Could this be the year Edison claims the St Levan Shield for the first time? Is Smeaton unstoppable? Can Winstanley build on their Sports Day win? Or perhaps this year Priestley, Newton or Campbell will reign supreme?

Miss Cunningham said, "The full team of House Captains and Vice Captains can be found on the House Dashboards section of our website: <https://houses.dhsb.org/house-dashboards>. Here you can also see the form reps from each year group".



## Charities

We supported Children in Need with our House Captains selling sweets and drinks at morning break and two bands entertaining everyone with live music in the Sixth Form Centre at lunchtime.

A big thank you to our House Captains and the bands who performed (Live and Loud and J15) and well done to everyone involved.

Miss Cunningham said, "The House Captains arranged a sweets and drinks sale in aid of Children in Need, plus the return of the hamper raffle after its success at the Summer Festival. The DHSB students are always so charitable and this event was no different. The sweets sold out by the end of breaktime and we have raised over £200 for Children In Need from this activity. The hamper raffle is continuing so this total will undoubtedly go up. The draw to see who the lucky winner is will take place next week".

The total raised will also be boosted by the packed audience who enjoyed listening to the bands in the Sixth Form Centre at lunchtime.



**Increase and revitalise the extracurricular offer and trips/experiences.**

## **NYC**

Four of our staff and over 40 students travelled to New York over October half term to experience everything that it had to offer. It was a wonderful experience for all involved.





## **Plymouth City Music Festival**

We had a number of students competing in the Plymouth City Music Festival in November:

Congratulations to all who took part.

Angus Fielding 8W - first place distinction - Gold - solo violin

Reuben Goodfield 8S - first place distinction - Gold - solo woodwind

Rowan Schilling 8E - second place distinction - Silver - solo woodwind

Ben Wotton 11C - second place distinction - Silver - solo piano grade 5 - 6

Lucas An 9C - third place commended - Bronze - solo piano grade 5 - 6

William Wooller 12ALG - first place honours - Gold - solo Woodwind

Tristan de Rochefort-Roper 11N - first place honours - Gold - solo violin

Well done also to the DHSB brass group who gained second place distinction - silver.



Austin Mair 11P, Elliot Mair 11C, Jack Benzie 11E , Isaac Van Der Lugt 12RWO, Daniel Bott 9P,  
Alexander Leonard-Williams 8P, Reuben French 7C

Huge congratulations to the DHSB singers who took Gold in their category.



Thomas Oakley 8N, Oliver Elford 8P, George Cavanagh 8W, Ethan Ferguson 8N, Bailey Barratt 8W, Rowan Terrell 8E, Aidan Walker 8C, Reuben Goodfield 8S, Dylan Cusack 8N, George Turton 8S, Zach Ross 8S, Samson Evans 8S, Jason Robilliard 8P, John Graham 8P, Barnaby Basterfield 8S, William Higginson 8S.

## 5 Shaping our futures

**Improving our internal and external environment through investing more resources and energy into achieving an excellent environmental and sustainable ethos towards a net-zero strategy.**

As a school we are always striving for excellence in all areas and for the last two weeks our catering team has been working with Chefs In Schools, a charity working to revolutionise catering in schools.

The catering team is currently going through a training programme which will see the food we offer in the school evolve over the coming months, with a healthier, more exciting offering in line with the aims of Chefs in Schools.

The changes have already become very visible at the lunch offering in Refuel (our main refectory) with new dishes appearing with more fresh vegetables, salads, fruit, condiments and freshly made bread accompanying the main meals and we are encouraging students to come and try the new menus and let us know what they think

A main meal, dessert or piece of fruit and a small bottle of water costs £3.00 (or £2.50 for just the main meal). Other alternatives at lunchtimes include jacket potatoes, pasta and a range of filled rolls.

[Link to new two week menu](#)

Mr McConnell our Estate Manager said, "Working with Chefs in Schools has been a real eye opener for the catering team regarding what is possible to achieve with school catering. The quality of our main meal offering is now really exciting and we want students and staff to come and see what we are doing in the main refectory at lunchtimes, try the food and give us some feedback. We are initially focusing on

improving the lunch offering and our main meals but over the coming months this will spread to morning break. I really hope everyone enjoys the direction we are taking”.

Chefs in Schools added, “We’re delivering nutritious, delicious, inexpensive, generation-powering, mind-opening, society-changing food in schools – and inspiring and enabling schools across the country to follow our lead”.



## Choices Evening

For the last six years, DHSB has provided a platform for local employers, apprentice providers and colleges to showcase the routes available to our students to ensure they choose the path most suited to them reaching their fullest potential.

Our October event welcomed Sharron Robbie MBE who represented the Devon and Cornwall Training Providers Network and ASK; Emma Hewitt and her colleague James Blake from Plymouth City Council and Building Plymouth; and Sophie Harvey and Jamie Rowley who discussed the offer from City College Plymouth.

Each of the speakers offered their expert insight into the opportunities available to students after GCSEs and A levels.

There is support available at DHSB to help all students find their way including A levels, T levels, apprenticeships and joining the workforce. The DHSB Careers & PSHE website will have all of the presentations from the evening, and more information for parents and students. Please use the link below.

[www.dhsb.org/careers](http://www.dhsb.org/careers)



### **Enhanced Work Related Learning Offer**

Many thanks to Noah Evans 13 CLJ who wrote this report following a special London visit to 10 Downing Street and the Houses of Parliament.

Noah said, "The Year 13 A-Level Politics class were honoured to be invited to Number 10 Downing Street, for a fascinating tour of the building at the centre of our politics and its history. We arrived in Westminster at 9am, after a very early start and long journey, to be greeted at the famous black door by Luke, the building's Front of House Manager and our exceptional tour guide. The most surreal part of the whole experience was, after passing through heavy security, simply walking down the street towards the door. This is a path we have all seen many Prime Ministers, Cabinet members, and other important people within politics take so many times; but walking up to the infamous and iconic black door is a feeling none of us will ever forget".

[Read more here](#)



### **Launchpad Live**

Mr Scott ensured that Year 11 students had a wonderful morning at Launchpad Live at Home Park looking at opportunities available to them at Post-16, and beyond, this is essential for students to consider additional options available to them to help make decisions on their next steps. They met future employers and explored work related learning activities.



## 6. Creative spirit and innovative thinking

### Raising Digital Engagement

We are delighted to have been awarded the Devon County Council supported Raising Digital Engagement Bronze Award for inspiring students to consider careers in tech and digital.

The Raising Digital Engagement programme includes a range of resources that encourage our students to explore how technology affects their lives at home, in school and in the workplace, and aims to future proof them for changing employment pathways. The programme aims to grow the number of students pursuing a digital career or taking computer science at GCSE and A level to help the UK close its digital skills gap in the future.

Details about the programme can be found [at this link](#).

