



## Devonport High School For Boys

# Everyone Succeeds

Here is the termly update on the progress we are making as a school towards our current priorities and to ensure that we strive to achieve our vision that 'Everyone Succeeds'

We have targeted the most significant challenges since September and have formed our School Development Priorities which you can read here.

### **Priority 1: Students achieve the highest academic outcomes**

#### **Sixth Form News**

Invitations to read Medicine at Brasenose College and St John's College in Oxford are among the four Oxbridge offers to students at Devonport High School for Boys this year.

I am delighted that the quality of our candidates was recognised again this year by admission tutors at both Oxford and Cambridge and that the offers received reflect a range of subjects including Medicine, Mathematics and Chemistry.

Whilst in this news we are celebrating the success of students gaining offers for the highly competitive courses at Oxford and Cambridge we are equally pleased for other students who are also receiving offers for a variety of Higher Education and Degree Apprenticeship courses as well as planning exciting gap year opportunities and pathways.

Sharon Davidson, Assistant Head Post-16, said, "Students receiving offers have demonstrated their intellectual ability through nearly seven years of consistent study and often a wider interest in their subject than merely the examination criteria. Students have engaged through participation in leadership and voluntary work, question time events and programmes such as Inspire2INVOLVE organised by the Villiers Park Education Trust and Downing College, Cambridge and a variety of other extra-curricular opportunities directed or supported by staff at the school".

Pictured are our four Oxbridge candidates with Ms Davidson.

**Liam Fowler, St John's College, Oxford, Chemistry**

**Somsubhro Bagchi, Trinity College, Cambridge, Mathematics**

**Zara Waddy, St John's College, Oxford, Medicine**

**Jackson Spry, Brasenose College, Oxford, Medicine**

Som said, "When I went to Cambridge on the open day, I could almost feel the history pouring in through the buildings. Occasionally, it would be pointed out that Newton had walked through this court or that Watson and Crick had announced their discovery of the structure of DNA at that pub. It was simply mind-blowing".



**Continued focus on the personal development of our students to fulfill our ambitions around the 2020 Gatsby Benchmarks.**

### **National Careers Week**

It was National Careers Week in March and I'm pleased to share this report from Sue Moreton, our IAG Co-ordinator (incorporating Careers Lead).

Research has proved that links with real world activities and problems, and encounters with employers and employees increase students' academic achievements as well as introducing skills they will need in order to be successful in the workplace. I have asked all the teaching staff to include an element of careers in their lessons as much as possible.

[Link to the National Careers Week website](#)

This year we also have 24 speakers coming into school on Friday and Year 10 and Year 11 students have been given the opportunity to select which one they would like to attend. Several of the speakers are staying in school to talk with Sixth Form students during the morning. The work sectors represented include public relations, physiotherapy, the Police and psychology to name but a few and we aim for most students to attend their first or second choice group.

Several of the speakers are Old Boys of the school which is great to see. We have another event later this term where we ask more recent alumni to return and talk to current students about their choices and universities or jobs.



[Link to IAG weekly blog](#)

I am gathering impact statements/case studies from some of our students about how they feel the general ethos of DHSB, especially the careers provision, including work experience and extra-curricular opportunities, has enabled them to gain skills that will help them to progress to their next steps, be that university, an apprenticeship, or an alternative. The first of these has been written by Jackson, currently in Year 13.

[Link to Jackson's case study](#)

### **Priority 3: Leadership at all levels**

**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.**

Leadership training for Senior prefects and House Captains

In January our sixth form leaders completed their Leadership training, thank you Joe Watkinson for the photo below. Joe said, "The final house captaincy leadership training is underway. We highly value student leadership and these opportunities give students valuable experience that they can use throughout their life".



### **Priority 4: Collaboration and community**

**Widen access to improve social mobility by overcoming barriers in the community.**

Relaxed Admissions Information Sessions

Jo Nally, our Fair Access and Partnerships Coordinator, over the last term invited parents, carers and primary school pupils to her relaxed information sessions held at a variety of local venues during January and February. We had an excellent engagement from parents who were able to find out more about the 11+ tests and admissions process, and ask Jo any questions they had.



**Promote and embed British Values and the Prevent agenda.**

### **75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz**

Sixth Form students Kia Clarke and Lorenzo Stacey had the privilege of visiting the Auschwitz concentration camp last year and were invited to share their experiences in a Radio Devon programme on for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Kia also took part in a ceremony on Plymouth Hoe.

Cllr Jemima Laing said, "An extremely moving ceremony at the Peace Garden on the Hoe [with] wonderful contributions from some of Plymouth's young people including a poem by our Young Laureate and insightful reflections on a visit to Auschwitz by a DHSB student"

Ms Davison added, "We're proud of Kia showing such empathy for the plight of Jewish people at the City Holocaust Memorial Ceremony in the Peace Garden on the Hoe".



Mr Riggs delivered our whole school Holocaust Memorial Day assembly which commemorated the liberation of the camps in Auschwitz in Poland 75 years ago in 1945.

See his summary below:

I have been teaching about the Holocaust for nearly 30 years. At the beginning of my career, schools were privileged to have survivors of the camps visit them and they bravely told their stories to rapt audiences who wondered at their strength of spirit, their determination to survive and their wish to pass on their stories so that genocide would never happen again. Genocides such as those in Cambodia, Darfur and Bosnia do still occur and it is vital that we keep teaching about these issues, especially with anti-Semitism in Europe beginning to raise its foul head once again.

I have visited Auschwitz with survivors of that camp and met survivors in this country and in Israel when I took a course at the Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust Memorial. But for many years, here at DHSB, we were enthralled by Mr Solly Irving, a wonderful man who told his story despite the great pain that it obviously caused him. He knew that his visits would come to an end at some point because of his advancing years, and on one of his last visits, sat me down and made me promise him that I would continue to tell the story of the Holocaust for him when he was no longer with us. I promised him that I would do that and have taken that responsibility exceptionally seriously since that day.

Six million Jewish people were murdered in the Holocaust. There were, of course, other groups such as the Roma Gypsies, who were almost wiped out as well. These numbers are too big for us to comprehend so what I tried to do on Wednesday was to deal with a few human beings in order to show their humanity and how they wanted to live and to love in the same way that we do today. One of the main exhibits at the Yad Vashem is the hall where there are volumes of books where they have recorded all the names of those who were murdered to try to restore them as individuals rather than statistics. There is also the Children's Memorial where a voice reads out the names of the children who perished. We were asked to just remember one of the names that we heard, and I remembered Shlomo Klein. He was murdered at Auschwitz aged 14, an age that all of our students can identify with.

The main reading at the assembly was a letter that a Holocaust survivor discovered sewn into the baby clothes that she was wearing when she was given up to a group who were rescuing Jewish children before the round ups. She did not discover it until much later in life. The letter is a heart breaking letter of love from a mother to her daughter, and is full of passion and rage as well as love. It is exceptionally emotional.

The letter was given to me at Auschwitz by a survivor of Auschwitz 20 years ago. They wanted to share it because it was the voice of one of the victims and because it showed so well that the victims were human beings. If there is anything that shows the sheer wickedness of the Holocaust, it is this. The letter and the slides that were displayed can be accessed via the link below.

[Link to whole school assembly slides](#)

[Link to a copy of the letter read at whole school assembly](#)

It is a very emotional experience delivering an assembly like this, but it is so worthwhile. Our students sat in absolute silence the whole time. I told them that I would like them to avoid giving applause and they did so even after the magnificent performance of the theme from Schindler's List by Mr Adams and Joe Stell, and the superb readings. I also asked them to bow their heads while I read Psalm 23 and to leave in silence at the end. Every member of the school did so.

I asked the school to make sure that they built a world based on love, kindness and tolerance. Their reactions make me even more confident that our wonderful students will leave and build that world. Mr Riggs concluded our whole school assembly by sharing these words by Edmond Burke.

### **A Nazi in the Family**

In the same week we received a visit from Derek Niamann (grandson of an SS Officer) who gave a presentation called 'Across the Divide'.

Ms Davidson hosted the visit and said, "This was one of the most enthralling tales I've ever heard. Students were held entranced by Derek's gentle voice and euphonious (Scottish) accent as he retold the story of his family set in the context of post first world war Germany to the present day. The negatives of 500 family photographs passed back from the Jewish occupants of his grandfather's home (when the Berlin Wall came down) brought the reality and contrast of the lives of Nazi families with those of the Jews we heard about on our assembly yesterday".

She added, "This was an unforgettable presentation and a privilege to hear it. Our students asked many questions and seemed to understand the necessity of such stories being told when tolerance and understanding must be sustained for the future".

**Improve our internal and external environment through investing more resources and energy into achieving an excellent environmental and sustainable ethos.**

### **The Eco-School Award**

As we shared with you back in September one of our whole school priorities is focusing on improving our environmental ethos.

We have signed up to the journey to become an international Green Flag Award Eco-School. The programme is designed to raise environmental awareness among young people and is run by the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy. Internationally, the programme is the largest educational programme in the world present in 67 countries and 52,000 schools. Our school is now part of this global community working to create environmental change for the benefit of future generations.

The Eco-School programme empowers students and staff, raises environmental awareness, improves the school environment and can also lead to financial savings for schools. Being an active member of the programme will be something our students will remember for the rest of their lives.

The programme focuses on ten important global issues:

Biodiversity, Energy, Global Citizenship, Healthy Living, Litter, Marine, School Grounds, Transport, Waste. Water

During the last academic term we spent time recruiting student Eco-School Ambassadors. Their first job was to complete a self-review and audit our school community against the Eco-School framework, this involved liaising with many people across the school to gain an accurate picture.

Following our review as a group we have prioritised the most significant areas that we would like to improve at DHSB, we also recognised that there are many things to celebrate even some that we were not all aware of. The areas that we will be working towards improving over the next couple of years are:

#### **Marine**

Reduce single use plastics in school and other projects to raise awareness of marine issues e.g. do a beach clean, use environmentally friendly cleaning materials etc.

#### **Waste**

Reduce the school's overall waste by developing recycling at the school, increase the number of products made from recycled materials, explore composting waste.

#### **Litter**

Reduce litter on the school site, create an anti-litter policy and improve all areas of this including in our local community.

### **Biodiversity**

Raise the profile of biodiversity of the school grounds developing projects around this.

### **Healthy Living**

Increase the number of healthy meals and fruit available at Refuel.

## **Priority 5: Creative and entrepreneurial spirit**

**Continue to use the latest cutting-edge technology creatively and innovatively influencing the wider educational community.**

### **Longitude Explorer Prize**

The Nesta Longitude Explorer prize is a competition that runs each year, based around a different STEM theme each time, it primarily intends to demystify innovation and entrepreneurship while encouraging young people to be the driving force in the future of tech for good. It has a £25,000 prize for the successful team.

Ms Buckler said, "We were incredibly proud to be chosen for the semi-finals in London, a development day event to network with industry professionals and learn how to develop our app. Nesta was a great experience for all the team, it developed our understanding of AI and improved some of our main skills, such as public speaking, ethics and cyber security".

Our students' idea 'Put it Down!' is an app designed to educate consumers on the health and environmental impact of everyday food. Consumers can be advised to put it down and choose a better option based on food image recognition and databases of information on the health and environmental data of the food, amount of palm oil for instance.

The students who took part had this to say.

"Thursday was an extremely active day, we got to code AI dogs, navigate a VR dog like robot round a maze and use the famous Pepper robot with a VR headset. After that we heard from a young entrepreneur Vincent Cook who ran a cyber security business for a living. The last workshop was on prototyping an app".

"The team enjoyed this trip and would definitely like to make it to the finals".

"Within the next few weeks, we'll produce a presentation about our idea and a video explaining what we learnt today".

We have found out recently that DHSB is through to the final, which is fantastic news.



**Grow the influence of the DHSB Alumni in inspiring the next generation in the build up to the DHSB 125.**

We were delighted to hear in the New Year Honours list 2020 that Harrison Nash has been awarded the British Empire Medal for his services to young people in South Africa.

Harrison is Charity Director at Maranatha Care Children (UK Charity) and Programme Manager, Maranatha Streetworkers Trust, South Africa and we support these charities through your donations for tea and coffee at parents evenings.

Congratulations Harrison – well deserved!

[Read more here](#)

