

Parental Communication & Engagement



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Message from Head Teacher

On Monday we worked closely with West Midlands Police to raise awareness of knife crime and had a screening device in school. This supports the Police's 'Safer School Project' across all Dudley borough schools. I am pleased to inform you yet again, that Dormston has been confirmed as a safe school.

Monday also saw our PSHE happen right across the school. During Periods 3 and 4:

- Year 7 examined the key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body as part of their Sex and Relationships Education;
- Year 8 learnt about crime and its consequences;
- Year 9 started character education, looking at how their individual character is made up;
- Year 10 took part in a variety of activities that encouraged them to practice mindfulness, helping them to understand how to positively influence their mental health and well-being;
- Year 11 were preparing for their next steps; this included looking at Post 16 courses at colleges, apprenticeships, T Levels and Traineeships.

Our Open Evening also took place on Thursday and we would like to say a massive thank you to all the many parents/carers, Year 6 students and also all the staff and Student Leadership Team that attended. Thank you so much for adhering to our session arrival times. It was a bit different this year, as we ran our Open Evening in 3 sessions to limit numbers and make it as safe as we could for everybody attending as we didn't want our Open Evening to cause a massive spike in infection rates.

Due to unprecedented demand, we have arranged for an additional Open Evening on Wednesday 20 October 2021 at 5.00pm - 6.00pm where parents/carers can hear the Head Teacher's Speech that was given at Open Evening and have a guided tour of the school by a member of Senior Leadership. Unfortunately, there will not be any other staff or students during this evening. ALL our Guided Tours during the school day are now full, including all the additional tours that were put on to cater for the huge demand. Can we please ask that if you are booked on a school tour W/C 18 October that you arrive promptly.

Don't forget, it is our **Year 11 Post 16 Evening** on Tuesday. At this event, parents/carers and students will get a chance to talk to representatives from local colleges and universities and find out more about the next stage in their lives. This is a really important event for all Year 11 students and their parents/carers and we hope that they will all be in attendance.

We are also looking forward to meeting our Parents' Committee on Thursday.

Best wishes.



Mr Dixon
Head Teacher

Key Letters/Information Sent Out Recently

ALL letters are now emailed home, hard copies are ONLY provided for 'Reply Slip' Letters. *Selected student only letters are given out to your child by hand or are posted directly home. The criterion for 'selected student only' opportunities are based on various factors depending on the trip and its focus. Unfortunately, we are unable to allow every student the opportunity to be involved with every activity which we understand sometimes causes disappointment. If you require more details about the selection process for any opportunity please contact the event organiser.

- Year 11 GCSE Citizenship Trip Letter;
- KS4 October English Newsletter.

Events

- Post 16 Evening - Tuesday 19 October 2021 at 6.00pm;
- Year 10 RE Revision Session - Thursday 21 October 2021 at 4.00pm;
- Parents' Committee - Thursday 21 October 2021 at 6.00pm;
- Year 11 Shrewsbury Prison Trip Citizenship Reply Slip Deadline - Friday 22 October 2021
- October Half Term - W/C October 2021.

Reminders/Update

Reading Ages

Following the recent tests in English lessons updated pupil reading ages have now been uploaded for you and your child to view on Go4Schools. The format is displayed in YY:MM - so for example 14:06 is a reading age of 14 years and 6 months. Test is capped at 16 - the highest reading age (Tests 8 - 14 YO). If your child did not complete due to absence, their most recent reading age test (from May 2021) result is displayed.

If your child is disappointed with their reading age or thinks it should be higher, we may be able to arrange for them to complete the test again - it is very much the result they got on the day and may improve with another test. Obviously, the best way to improve reading ages is to read, read, and read again – from a variety of good quality sources ranging from fiction novels and short stories, to non-fiction news and magazine articles.

At Dormston, we firmly believe that literacy is an essential skill to enable students to read and write as experts in every subject across the curriculum. These skills are vital to make sense of the world around us. As such, the better we are at these skills the more successful we can expect to be in life. At Dormston we recognise that improving literacy can have an impact on students' self-esteem, motivation, behaviour and attainment. We believe that reading, and particularly reading for pleasure, has a direct impact on cognitive and social communicative development. It has been shown to improve health and wellbeing, as well as improving compassion and empathy for others. Our aim is to develop each student's potential to the point where they are reading at, or above, their chronological age. Baseline data will inform us of individual intervention need. We encourage pupils to read independently for at least 30 minutes per day at home. As parents or carers, you are your child's most influential teacher and role model with an important part to play in helping your child to learn to read. There is nothing more powerful than your child seeing you read – they more than likely learned their interest in books as a child at bedtime with you.

For more information on how you can help your child please visit the section titled **"How you can help your child's literacy at home"** on our school website: <https://dormston.dudley.sch.uk/literacy/>

Suggested reading lists are also available here: <https://dormston.dudley.sch.uk/the-personal-learning-centre-and-library/>

Any queries please contact your child's English teacher in the first instance.

For further information on recommended reads please contact:

Mrs S Ellsmore - PLC Manager/School Librarian

Mr D Fox - Literacy Co-ordinator

Congratulations/Well Done

Congratulations to the following students who received a Head Teacher Commendation this week.

Ashton Fletcher	Ethan Flavell	Lucy Poyner	Joshua Smith
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