



Dunottar News

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@Dunottarschool



We welcomed pupils back to school in September with a number of year group bonding days. On Friday 3rd September,

pupils took part in a variety of activities within their year groups, from water sports to high ropes. It was fantastic to see pupils having fun together, building new friendships, collaborating and pushing themselves out of their comfort zones to try new activities and challenges.

I have been delighted to see and hear our classrooms buzzing with aspiration and learning, with knowledge sharing and with problem solving. Our new pupils have settled in very well and pupils are being looked after by our pastoral teams.

We continue to upgrade our facilities on site, and this term saw the opening of the new school fitness suite – 'The Courtyard Gym'. We would like to thank the Dunottar Society who funded this amazing facility, which is located on the site of the school's original gym.

Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate the official opening of the Castle Theatre and Performing Arts Centre when we were treated to some uplifting and inspiring performances from our talented singers and dancers.

I wish you all a safe and relaxing half term break.

Best wishes

Mark Tottman, Headmaster



Official Opening of the Castle Theatre

On Wednesday 29th September, we welcomed Sir Jon Coles (Chief Executive of United Learning), along with Councillor Jill Bray, the Mayor of Reigate and Banstead, representatives from United Learning, Governors, parents - past and present and pupils to the official opening of our Castle Theatre and Performing Arts Centre. The event was a celebration of the incredible journey the school has been on since it was acquired by United Learning in 2014. Our talented performing arts pupils entertained the audience with uplifting musical numbers and exciting dance routines.

"Pupils' involvement in the performing arts benefits well-being, self-esteem, motivation and creativity. The official opening of our Castle Theatre and Performing Arts Centre is an exciting moment in the school's history - creating a space for the whole community and shaping our future." - Mark Tottman, Headmaster.



Year 7 Start of Term Adventures

It was wonderful to see our Year 7 pupils getting to know each other, building friendships, having fun, supporting each other and challenging themselves at High Ashurst at the start of term. Pupils enjoyed a range of activities including climbing and problem solving tasks. More photos can be found on our Facebook page.



Start of Term Bonding Days

On Friday 3rd September, we took Year 8, 9, 10 and the Sixth Form off timetable for the day to allow them to reconnect with each other, welcome new pupils and most importantly, have some fun!

Year 8 Go Ape!



Year 9 Go Wild at Blackland Farm!



Year 10 Take to the Water at Mercers Lake!



Sixth Formers Go Ape!



More photos of all the trips can be found on our Facebook page.

Year 11—Preparing for A Levels and Beyond

This half term, the focus for our Year 11 pupils has been looking at their A Level options and the transition into Sixth Form. The term started with a Morrisby profiling session for all pupils. Morrisby Profile uncovers how individuals think and what they enjoy. When a pupil doesn't know which subjects to pick or which careers to pursue, Morrisby's suggestions will give ideas, showing how well individuals match dependent on strengths, interests, motivations and ambitions. When looking at a specific career, Morrisby provides detailed information including routes in, skills required, pay, and qualifications needed. In addition, Morrisby will also suggest many related careers.

On 23rd September, we welcomed our Year 11 pupils and their parents to our Sixth Form open evening. The Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department were all on hand to discuss the broad range of A Level subjects available at Dunottar and to guide pupils in their decision making process. There was a real buzz in the room as pupils eagerly chatted to our A Level subject specialists and current Sixth Form pupils, who offered valuable insight into studying in the Sixth Form.



On Wednesday 13th October, to support their option choices, Year 11 pupils were able to sample a variety of A level lessons including Psychology, Sociology, Science and Business & Economics, amongst others, during their Sixth Form taster afternoon. We look forward to guiding them through this next step of their educational journey.



Step Counter Coding

How do everyday objects like fitness trackers actually work? In Year 7 computer science lessons pupils coded our mini micro:bit computers to respond to movement so that their device kept track of how many steps they had done and displayed a running total.

High energy filled the room as pupils eagerly cut paper to make wrist bands, decorated them and stuck the devices to their wrists to test their code out. All of a sudden the classroom mirrored a fitness class as pupils jumped up and down or jogged on the spot to eagerly see if their new creation successfully showed their step count.

It is valuable for pupils to start to explore how our everyday devices work. There are such a variety of technology jobs available; hopefully enjoying problem solving and being creative in our computer science lessons will inspire pupils to consider a tech career in the future.

Computing is about solving problems with creativity; there are many job opportunities available for pupils with these in-demand skills.



Academic Distinctions

Well done to all our pupils who have been awarded Academic Distinctions this half term.

Pupil	Year	Award	Subject	Teacher's Comment
Ava, D	7	Academic Distinction	History	Ava has been given an academic distinction for her outstanding homework on the Battle of Hastings. Ava went above and beyond for her homework, which was to write an article about the battle. Instead, Ava created a whole newspaper which included a detailed description of the battle and a lot of evidence about why William won. The presentation of the newspaper was excellent. Well done Ava.
Jude, F	7	Academic Distinction	English	Jude delivered an outstanding presentation to his fellow pupils on a book about Lego Mini Figures. He spoke eloquently, structured his speech with style and enchanted his listeners with a compelling insight into the subject. Jude should be congratulated for his contribution and fantastic demonstration of warrior learner traits: curiosity, independence and aspiration.
Sophie, P	7	Academic Distinction	English	Excellent presentation given about the book Sophie has recently read. She produced a series of Top Trump cards to help her present the characters, narrative and key themes. Sophie's delivery was confident, fluent and very articulate. As an audience member, I was completely captivated.
Bella, M	8	Academic Distinction	RS	Fantastic attitude towards home learning. A beautifully presented piece of work.
Martha, C	9	Academic Distinction	History	An excellent speech to Parliament by William Wilberforce, packed with a huge range of factual evidence and strong empathy skills.
Abi, G	12	Academic Distinction	English	Abi has written an outstanding Scrum in English and her hard work should be celebrated. She's shown superb progress in English, continuously taken feedback on board and demonstrated her ability to write at a high academic level. Specifically, Abi can analyse the playwright's meaning through a literary critical lens, applying her own interpretation of how the characters, setting and scene are constructed for effect. Abi should be extremely proud of her efforts.

New Dunottar Gym

The newly installed gym has proved a real hit with pupils and staff within the school. All pupils will have time factored into their curriculum PE/Games lessons and/or co-curricular offerings to make use of the gym to support their fitness and help promote a positive lifelong relationship with physical activity. We would like to thank the Dunottar Society for funding this amazing facility. Interestingly, the school's original gym was actually in the location of our new fitness suite.

The gym offers a cross section of cardio equipment including running machines, upright bikes and rowers, plus a wide range of free weights, resistance equipment and machines to ensure a full body workout.



Year 10 Trip to Kew Gardens

On Friday, 1st October Year 10 art and photography pupils visited Kew Gardens to support the development of ideas for their current Natural Forms project. An apprehensive start to the day as the rain poured down outside. It was hard to believe that the rain was predicted to stop later in the day, however, by the time pupils stepped off the coach on Kew Road the sun was shining, and spirits were high.



Throughout the morning pupils spent time drawing in the impressive Marianne North Gallery which contains more than 800 remarkable botanical paintings. We were lucky to have the space to ourselves and pupils produced some very well observed colour and black and white responses to the work. After lunch, pupils spent time in the Temperate House and Princess of Wales conservatory where they worked on their photography skills, taking primary photos for their sketchbooks. As always, time flew by very quickly and before we knew it, we had arrived back on High Trees Road. It was an exciting day, and we very much appreciated the opportunity to once again offer an off-site educational visit.

GARDENING CLUB

THIS TERM WE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON DE-WEEDING THE GARDEN. IT HAS BEEN LOTS OF FUN AND WE HAVE ALL HAD A LAUGH. WE ARE PREPARING THE SPACE FOR OUR NEXT PLANTING SESSION SO WE CAN PLANT LOTS OF FLOWERS, VEGETABLES AND A VARIETY OF PLANTS.



WE OFTEN RE-USE BOTS AND BOTS IN A GARDENING CLUB LIKE USING MILK JUGS AS WATERING CANS AND USING DEAD FLOWER HEADS TO PLANT MORE SEEDS.



It has been great to see our pupils getting involved in our exciting co-curricular programme this half term. With so many clubs on offer from music, art and drama to food, sports and Lego robotics, there really is something for everyone.

Here are some of this half term's highlights.

Our Training Orchestra has been sounding great during rehearsals—we can't wait to hear their pieces performed later this term!

Dissection Club has been incredibly popular with our Year 7 pupils who were fascinated when looking at the cross section of a sheep's kidney.

Both our Bronze and Silver DofE teams have completed their final expeditions this term, albeit not in the locations that were originally planned thanks to the fuel shortage. Teams enjoyed the hikes and braved heavy downpours in true Warrior Leaner style!



DUNOTTAR SCHOOL PTA – OCTOBER 2021

We have lots to share with you including socials, ways to support our community and some festive fun!

After 18 months of only being able to organise virtual events we are delighted to be organising a few social gatherings where we will be able to meet in person. We appreciate that there are many parents whose children have joined since the pandemic started who haven't had the chance to attend any Dunottar School PTA events, so now we are planning to make up for it! *More details on how to book events after half term - via Facebook/Instagram/Twitter/Classlist*



Festive Wreath Making with The Giant Pledge Wednesday 1st December

We are delighted that The Giant Pledge will be holding a wreath making fundraising event for Dunottar parents, staff and friends of the school this year. The event will be held at Hartsfield Manor, Betchworth (online if Covid restrictions apply).

The Giant Pledge was set up by fellow Dunottar parents, to help beat childhood cancer following their own son's diagnosis in 2017. All funds raised go to the children's team at The Royal Marsden Hospital in Sutton to help fund much needed research into childhood and young people's cancer as well as supporting the staff.

Christmas Secrets Stall

The Secrets Stall is a Dunottar PTA Christmas tradition that will be held in December (during school time). To prepare, please could your child bring in any unwanted or nearly new items that would make suitable gifts for parents, grandparents, siblings or other family members. These should be items that you or your families would be happy to receive! Children can then select and buy items at a nominal cost that they would like to give as presents and wrap them at school on 10th December. This usually starts with year 7, until gifts have run out. Donations can be made at Reception after half term.

Winter Warmer Evening Friday 19th November, 7.30-9.30pm

The Dunottar School PTA Christmas season kicks off on Friday 19th November! Don your bobble hat and join us for festive drinks, food and some Christmas tunes against the backdrop of Dunottar's stunning grounds. There is no cost for the event but places will be limited.

Gin Tasting at the Vineking Tasting Rooms Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th December 7.30-9.30pm

Following the success of our virtual wine tasting back in February, we are delighted to be hosting two gin tasting evenings at the Vineking Tasting Rooms at the start of December. What better way to kick off a jolly December?!



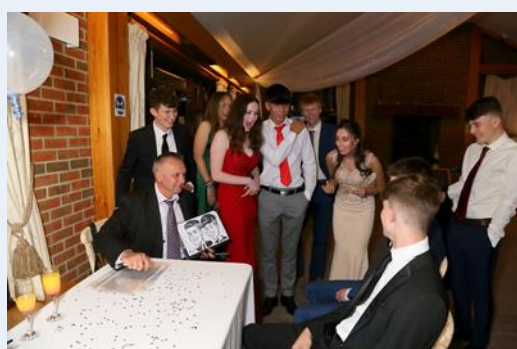
The Big Christmas Hamper Raffle

Last year, with so many people facing such difficult times, we took the decision to cancel the Christmas raffle and encourage donations to our local foodbanks instead. This year, the Christmas raffle is back! We ask you to kindly donate items of food and drink, like Christmas puddings, chocolates, preserves, wine, Prosecco, Christmas crackers, etc. We also understand everyone is busy at this time, so if you prefer to make a cash donation for the PTA elves to go shopping for hamper items please put this in an envelope and hand in at Reception labelled hamper donation. We will then magically transform them into some gorgeous festive hampers, with your opportunity to win them in our Christmas Raffle. The proceeds will be shared with our local foodbanks (who, wherever, possible prefer financial donations in the lead up to Christmas) and the PTA.



PTA Funds Supporting our School

We continue to support our school in different ways – boardgames for the Sixth Form common room area and a caricaturist for the Year 11 leavers' Prom.



PTA Covid Donations Update – Supporting Mental Health

I am so pleased to be able to confirm how the remaining PTA COVID donations from our fundraiser will be spent - mental health.



Over the past few months we have been talking with a local charity - The Lucy Rayner Foundation in Redhill, as we agreed as a PTA to try and support mental health in our community, particularly amongst young people.

- The mission of this foundation is simple, yet complex - to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of physical and mental ill health in young people.
- The story is heartbreaking - On the 5th May 2012, Jenny Rayner and her family were tragically faced with the impact of mental illness, when their daughter Lucy took her own life aged just 22.

To this end we are so pleased to have donated £3,000 to this cause, knowing that our money will go directly to helping the foundation support those in our community with mental health troubles.

Our money will be spent according to need in a number of ways:

- Mental Health Awareness Workshops - 1 hour workshops on mental health, the signs and symptoms. These workshops are delivered and tailor made for staff in local schools, pupils and parents.
- Mental Health Resilience Workshops for Students - these workshops include a range of interactive activities to raise awareness of mental health along with information on specific mental health issues. These run once a week for a month with a select few pupils in schools.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Course - for the staff. This course teaches skills that aim to give staff confidence in spotting the signs of mental health issues in a young person, teaches first aid and the ability to guide them towards the support they need.

Furthermore, as we continue our talks we hope to build a working relationship with the Foundation and provide support, education and guidance to our school community.

My thanks to Rebecca Jacks and Neil Robson, PTA, for working on this.

Carol, PTA Chair

Thank You

Thanks to everyone for continuing to support the foodbanks this term. We are also supporting East Surrey Hospital's appeal for pyjamas for children who have to stay in hospital over Christmas – please donate a pair (new, in the package, newborn-17, girl/boy, not Christmas designs) and leave at school reception.



Nearly New Sale

11th November 2021 at 4.15pm



Netball

It was so exciting to see all the girls back on the courts for pre-season training at the end of August. The long break from sport has been tough, but we have had a few development weekends to dust off the cobwebs and to also work on personal fitness. We will continue to maintain this throughout the term. Our new Year 7 cohort has shown great enthusiasm and skill and we are really looking forward to seeing them develop this year. Our Saturday programme this term will be an equal split between lacrosse and netball with lots of game play being the focus. Many of our girls have also continued to train for their clubs outside of Dunottar and it is great to hear of the many girls now representing our local clubs – Aces Netball and Reigate Roses. We are also extremely pleased to welcome London Pulse Netball to Dunottar, who are using our facilities as a hub for their Pulse Pathway Trials and summer camps.

Lacrosse

We have really enjoyed seeing all the girls getting back into their competitive sports and seeing them get enthused about lacrosse all over again. The start to the season has seen a very mixed story for each of the year groups and we are headed into the half term break with a real buzz about all of the teams.

Year 7 have really hit the ground running and the rate that they are all progressing at is commendable. There was a fantastic introductory round of coached games hosted by Caterham and this proved to be a great way for the girls to get their first games under their belts. Two weeks later saw a team travel to Claremont, securing a win but more importantly than the result, playing intelligent team lacrosse. A majority of these first team players have seen the benefit of training at the summer sessions and weekly sessions at Reigate Lacrosse Club and there are more who are set to join soon. Especially at this stage in their lacrosse journey, the more they play, the quicker they can progress.

Year 8 and 9 have been their usual enthusiastic selves and been an absolute pleasure to coach. It was brilliant to see them all involved at Caterham and it was fascinating to see how some pupils had really progressed since the last time we had seen them play. A fortnight later saw the girls playing a fellow United Learning school, Guildford High School, who are at the top of the deck when it comes to lacrosse. Although this was a very tough fixture for the girls, I have been reassured by their resilience and determination. From the conversations I have had with the girls, they have learned lessons from the defeats about the physicality of the game, the importance of working on their cradling and stick skills, and the importance of teamwork all over the field. It is brilliant to see that so many of them are able to deal with the disappointment of losing and have adopted a growth mindset to move forward from it. A week later at the Abbot's Hill tournament, the Year 9s massively impressed the coaches with their communication in team defence that helped them to secure 3rd in their group, joint 5th out of 10 overall.

Year 10 had a very broken start to the season with the first game missed due to Duke of Edinburgh commitments and inevitable covid-related absences. This meant that the first time that the team got together was for the Abbot's Hill tournament. This is a bit of a long journey up to Hemel Hempstead but always





guarantees a good level of competition across all the teams. I was very proud of the grit the girls showed, as well as how well they improved throughout the day, really working as a team to compensate for not having any subs.

The Seniors have also had absences due to Covid, university visits and commitments to competing in other sports. This meant that their first game against Caterham was a bit of a rude awakening with key players missing and new players having to step up to learn lacrosse during the game. Two weeks later, they travelled to Canterbury to play Kings with a more experienced but rusty team, who took the first half to work a few things out defensively before turning it around to win the second half. With the senior team hoodies on their way, a weekly training time sorted out and some cobwebs blown away, the seniors have glimpsed their own potential and are on a path to playing some great lacrosse this season.

I will be sending out an email with more details about what else is happening in the local lacrosse scene. I hope you all enjoy your half term—David McColl.

Football

This half term has certainly been a busy one for our football teams who have been training on a weekly basis as well as fulfilling their cup fixtures. For the first time in Dunottar history we entered a girls football team into the English Schools' Cup (ESFA) where they lost to a very strong Bullers Wood School for Girls, who have a good chance of going all the way in the cup. It was, however, great to see our U13 girls (Year 7 and 8) playing together for the first time and they should be proud of their efforts!



Also, for the first time ever we entered two boys teams into the Independent Schools' Cup (ISFA). Our U13 team was made up of Year 7 and 8 boys and our U15 team was made up of Year 9 and 10 boys. We took two huge scalps in the first round with our U13 team beating Brighton College 4 - 0 and our U15 team beat Westminster School 5 - 4 after extra time in an epic thriller which saw us come from behind 4 times to eventually win the game. The second round draw was not kind to us with the U13s being drawn against Royal Russell and the U15s facing Bradfield College. Both of these schools have won this national competition previously but our boys can be proud of their efforts in these games which, unfortunately, saw us lose both ties.

Our U12, U13, U14 and U15 boys football teams are all still in the English Schools' Cup (ESFA) with our U12s and U14s getting a bye to the second round, whilst our U13s beat Kew House 5 - 1 and our U15s beat London

Enterprise Academy 10 - 0 in their first round ties. The second round ties will take place after the October half term break. We have also had two of our girls selected for the Prep Schools District Football Team which is a superb achievement!

Well done Lucy H and Lily C!





Rugby

It has been great to get back to some competitive rugby against other schools this year, having been greatly missed last year. Seeing the new Year 7s and the Year 8s (who obviously didn't get the chance to play competitively last year) take to the field against other schools has been wonderful.

At the half way stage in the term, we can look back fondly on some exciting block fixtures and results against other schools. As ever we always aspire to finish a season with as close to a 50/50 win/loss ratio as possible. As is often spoken about in sport, it is often the losses that bring about greater evaluation, reflection and subsequent development.

The term started with two of our older teams taking on Glyn's B teams. These were comfortable wins to move into the season, and we will look to take on Glyn's As next time, with greater teams fielded too. The following Saturday we played against Ewell Castle, with 3 wins and 3 losses. Special mention to the U13Bs who edged their game 50-45 and the U12Bs who comprehensively won their first ever school game. On Saturday 25th September, during the crux of #fuelgate, we saw both schools have great issue getting to the respective away venues. It was pleasing that rugby matches still got to be played nonetheless, with Dunottar faring well across the reduced block.

On 2nd October, we took on our United Learning counterparts, Ashford School, and once again returned with a strong set of results. At the time of writing this, we are in the middle of a week where we are playing Claremont Fan Court school across U12-U15 ages, these are always exciting and well contested fixtures.

A special mention must also go to our 1st XV Squad, who have shown great commitment, attitude and desire in their training sessions, and now leading into the second half term fresh off a win against Wilson's School. They have matches throughout the second half term and are showing strong role modelling for their younger peers. This was epitomised at the Ashford fixture, when the U12s came over to watch the closing few minutes of the senior fixture. In many respects this is what school sport is all about.

Here's looking forward to the second half of the rugby term!

Cricket

Our 1st XI cricket team enjoyed a T20 match against Priory Llamas early on in September, giving them a good chance to try out the new kit!



Mental Health First Aiders

We are very pleased to report that 15 members of staff recently completed and passed their Mental Health First Aid course, giving our pupils extra support and guidance with their wellbeing. We are looking to book another session for additional staff later in the year.



Talking Therapies Course for Pupils 17+

We would also like to make parents aware that DHC Talking Therapies is offering a free course for students aged 17 and above to support building resilience to cope with the typical pressures that come with student life, such as exam stress and managing their workload. The course is designed to help students learn strategies to manage and reduce their worries and anxiety.

The flyer features the DHC Talking Therapies and NHS logos at the top. The main title is 'Live Well: Worry Less and Build Resilience A Course for Students'. It lists three key questions: 'Do you feel stressed, worried, anxious, depressed?', 'Are you experiencing unhelpful thoughts and worries that come with being a student?', and 'Are you struggling to manage exam stress or returning to college / university?'. A thought bubble contains the text: 'I don't have any time for myself', 'What if?', 'I can't cope', 'This is all too much', and 'How will I manage?'. Below this, it states: 'Join our online therapy group which will use Cognitive Behavioural Therapy methods to help you manage worries and to build resilience'. Contact information includes: 'Date: Tuesday 2nd November 2021', 'Time: 18:00-19:30', 'Via: Teams video call on your computer or mobile phone.', 'Access to Teams is required.', 'Talk to us today 01483 906 392 Or visit dhctalkingtherapies.co.uk'. The bottom of the flyer shows a network of orange location pins.

Make Your School Run Greener



At Dunottar, we use the HomeRun platform to provide more travel options and become a greener school.

We kindly ask all parents to join our private network as soon as possible by using the unique link below (it only takes a couple of minutes).

Sign up here: <https://www.homerun-app.com/launch/ds2738>



Upcoming Events



Music and Performing Arts Scholars' Performance Evening

Thursday 4th
November 7.30pm

 Dunottar School

Tickets can be booked at:
[https://
www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/
music-and-performing-arts-
scholars-performance-
evening-tickets-
179833876967](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/music-and-performing-arts-scholars-performance-evening-tickets-179833876967)



Our talented musicians from across the school will be performing as soloists and choirs at St Matthew's Church, Redhill

**Thursday 11th November
at 1.10pm**

Entry is free - donations welcome

Please come along to support them

 Dunottar School

No need to book—just come along.

Music Lessons



Music Tuition

Dunottar Saturday Music Academy

Calling all young aspiring musicians aged 5-18!

All abilities welcome from beginners to more experienced musicians.

8.30am to 3.00pm on Saturdays

Lesson times are arranged between the teacher and pupil

Tuition is available in Piano, Singing, Woodwind, Strings and Music Theory

To find out more visit: www.dunottarschool.com/musicacademy

The Dunottar Saturday Music Academy welcomes young musicians aged 5-18 both from Dunottar School and the surrounding areas. It provides an exciting setting for pupils to immerse themselves in musical learning and enjoyment through tuition and collaboration with others. The Academy is committed to musical excellence and aims to nurture young musicians through dedicated teaching and the provision of opportunities that are unique to Dunottar.

[Click here to find out more](http://www.dunottarschool.com/musicacademy)

