

Damers News

Autumn 2
2023



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome to our final half termly newsletter for 2023! I would like to thank you all for the warm welcome you have given me in my first term here. I really feel part of the Damers family now and am very much looking forward to the New Year ahead.

How wonderful to round off the year with the KS1 and Foundation plays and their glittering performances. They were all so proud to show their families their carefully practiced singing, dancing and lines – I really felt privileged to see them in full song and with such confidence! The year group teams are working on the links to the performance and they will be with you soon. Thank you to the adults working on each play – you did an amazing job!

Christmas is certainly done in style here at Damers and one of the highlights has to be the impressive PTA Christmas Secret Shop. What a huge job to source and wrap around 2,000 presents for very eager children to choose – imagine writing that list! It was a magical day and was so well organized – thank you to all the PTA elves. The group has been planning events and ideas to raise money throughout the year so please do support things when you have a chance – it makes a big difference to so many children.

I wish you a very relaxing and enjoyable Christmas break.

Louise Greenham
Head of School



Don't forget!
Back to School
Tues 2nd Jan



Happy Christmas from all at Damers!

We want to say a HUGE thank you to our volunteers who have supported us in various ways over the past academic year. We would be lost without you!



Our new Foundation children enjoyed their first school trip to Thornecombe Woods last month. We were looking for signs of autumn and the woods did not disappoint. Lots of 'treasure' was collected and brought back to school to learn about. The children were so excited to be going on a coach, some for the first time. Huge thanks to our army of helpers who made this such a success.

MATHS MANIA!

Christmas is an exciting time of the year so why not combine Christmas and maths at the same time?

[Track Santa](#) on his busiest day of the year!



- Where does Santa visit first, second ... last (ordinal numbers)
- How far does he travel?
- Why are there different time zones around the world?
- What time do you need to get to bed to make sure you are asleep before he visits?
- Estimate how many mince pies Santa will eat!

Stick Man!

Year 1 have been very busy learning our lines, singing and practising our dance moves ready for our Christmas plays. We hope you enjoyed our performances of 'Stick Man - the Musical'!



School Admission Consultations

Dorset have entered into the statutory consultation on its School Admission Arrangements 2025/2026 running through to the 9th January 2024. [Details of the consultation will be available to view here.](#)

Responses must be submitted either in writing to School Admissions Team, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ or by email to schoolorganisation@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by **Friday 9th January 2024.**

Upon the conclusion of the consultation period all responses will be considered carefully and a report will be presented to Dorset Council's Cabinet meeting on **Tuesday 30 January 2024.**

Science Abassadors Jigsaw and RE Next Term

Congratulations to our new Science Ambassadors! Each class has chosen a fantastic science role model to promote science in their class. These children have all shown that they can question, explore and discover, which is what we do in our science lessons. They can help others too. Great work, everybody!



Our Jigsaw theme for next half term is Going for Goals.

In RE, Year 1 will be learning about Jesus as a friend, Year 2 will be investigating the Jewish celebration of Passover, Year 3 will be finding out about Jesus' miracles as they are told in the Bible and Year 4 will also be looking at the Jewish celebration of Passover and Jewish rites of passage.



Thank you for all your donations! We raised £537.43 for Children in Need and

£302.82 for the Poppy Appeal.



Thank you for responding to our plea to avoid parking in the Melrose Court car park at drop off and collection. We were so concerned about children's safety and are now feeling more confident that the area can remain safe without the need for cars reversing and driving through this busy space - thank you for your support.



Carnival of the Animals

In music this term in Year 2 we have been learning about the piece Carnival of the Animals. We have loved guessing the different animals, moving like each animal in time with the music, creating our own artwork and even composing our own musical descriptions of animals on classroom instruments. If you want to watch a performance by the talented Kanneh-Mason family, which we've enjoyed in school, [click here](#).

We have also loved learning about how significant Victorian nurses changed healthcare and attitudes towards women forever! We made our own Victorian herbal remedies using herbs from our school garden, compared the lives of Florence Seacole and Mary Seacole and reflected on how they each embodied many of our Damers school values.



This half term we have been singing ...

[The Feelings Song](#)

[Something Inside So Strong](#)



Super Spotters

Brrrr it's cold outside! We've been thinking about the Damers Value of the Month which is love and how we can show this by helping the wildlife over the chilly winter months. The bird hide area has a new fence to help protect the small saplings and woodland bulbs. We've noticed that lots more small birds have been visiting the bird feeders so our fence is also providing shelter and is a super place for our resident robin to sing to us. We have put up bug boxes filled with foraged twigs and leaves creating cosy spaces for our insect friends to spend winter.

Here are five ways you can help wildlife over winter:

- Let your garden go wild. Leave piles of leaves that animals can hide, rest and hibernate in.
- Break the ice. If you have a pond make sure there is a hole in the ice so that toxic gases don't build up. Always make sure an adult does this job as ponds can be dangerous places especially when frozen.
- Feed the birds. Provide a range of seeds, fresh unsalted peanuts and table scraps (cheese and fruits such as apples and pears.) Garden birds also love dried mealworms or waxworms, which can be bought from bird food suppliers.
- Provide fresh water. When the temperatures drop below zero, finding clean fresh water to drink can be difficult for wildlife. You can help by leaving some out for them. It is best to provide fresh water each night in a shallow bowl. Don't add anything to stop the water freezing, and change the water every day to ensure it's fresh.
- Attract visitors with good food. When food is scarce, putting out a small amount of an appropriate treat will help to see the mammals visiting your garden through the winter.

If you spot anything in nature you'd like to share please email superspotters@damers.dorset.sch.uk

dorset.sch.uk



Damers Christmas Reading Challenge



Read a book under the Christmas tree.

Read a Christmas themed book.

Read a book that is older than you are!

Build a den and read a story in it.

Read a story to a family member (or pet).

Draw a picture from your favourite book.

Read a book that makes you laugh.

Have a whole family bedtime story.

Read a poem out loud.

Complete all 9 challenges to win a prize!

When you have completed all the challenges email reading@damers.dorset.sch.uk with some photos of you completing the challenges and you could win a prize!

Monet Makers

Year 3 enjoyed workshops with the National Gallery exploring Monet's artwork and the different techniques he used to create some wonderful pieces of art. We explored colour mixing using colour wheels and then practised the different ways that Monet applied different colours to highlight light.

We used what we learnt to create some of our own artwork inspired by Monet.



Butterfly Totem Pole

Damers First School have unveiled an amazing butterfly totem pole in their school grounds overlooking the Great Field on Poundbury.

The wooden, carved butterfly totem pole came about through an art exhibition the school took part in with Poundbury Arts organised by Judy Tate. The exhibition was called It's up to Us, after a book with the same name by Christopher Lloyd, forwarded by King Charles. Each year group focused on a different artist from the book. Year 3 made a wonderful ceramic totem pole (inside our school) with a ceramic artist and we wanted another totem pole to go with this for our outside area. We came across Victor Krause's impressive wood carving work at the Poundbury Arts Exhibition and we thought we had to have Victor working with the children on the totem pole.

Victor worked with teacher Nikki Simmonds and Year 4 children to design the totem pole. Having butterflies was really important to the children as they are part of the Damers school logo and also our strand names. They are also part of a natural cycle that keeps on going. The totem pole symbolises small butterflies flying up around the pole to become bigger butterflies flying off to their next destination. Victor has done an amazing job carving and putting the totem pole together. We are very grateful for the time he spent sharing his expertise with the children.

The project wouldn't have been possible without the donation of the cedar tree from AG Tree Services' Alan Goldstone and the funding support from Patricia Fay Memorial Fund through The Arts Society Dorset Branch, who worked tirelessly to fill out the grant forms. Also, a huge thank you to CG Fry and Sons and Jason Hockey who had the challenge of getting the totem pole into the school grounds and standing it up right!



The 5 Rs

Charlie from Learn Play Nexus came to film Damers Eco Crew about the importance of the 5Rs - Rethink, Reduce, Reuse, Refill, Recycle - and to hear what they thought about the U-Fill Gluestick (the world's only refillable gluestick). The film will help to launch the U-Fill Refill empties sack across the UK where all the refill gluestick empty containers will be placed in the paper sack. The sack, once full will then get collected by a courier and sent back to the Learn Play Nexus HQ to be refilled with glue and reused.



Copper Base News

We have been enjoying books about the snow as we start to think about Christmas time. We have been writing instructions for building a snowman and making snowman families. The Copper Base children have been working together to sequence the stories, change the characters and write new endings. We have really enjoyed sharing these books in pairs and in small groups.

A few of our children have thoroughly enjoyed listening to Mrs Kenny read 'Snapper - The Perfect Christmas Tree' whilst having a Snapper cuddle. Thank you to Waitrose in Poundbury for their kind donations of Snapper books and cuddle toys for classrooms across the school.



Year 4 Powers Up

We've been charged with excitement in our sparky science topic this half term where we have been learning about electricity! We created circuits, used bulbs, buzzers and motors. We have also been investigating what materials are good electrical conductors and which are not.

We welcomed Tracy into Year 4 from the Earth Energy Education team. She taught us lots about Solar Power and the importance of renewable energy. We enjoyed investigating



circuits powered by solar cells.

We've also been enjoying finding out about the Vikings in History and have been enjoying our class book, Odd and the Frost Giants, in literacy.



Music at Damers

Music is such an important part of our school life at Damers. Here's a little flavour of what we do and how you and your children can get further involved:

Weekly singing assemblies with Mrs Hardisty. The highlight of her week!

Choir for years 2-4 on Thursday afternoons after school. We currently have 40 children in choir, but there's always room for more!

Instrumental lessons provided by DASP Music teachers. We currently have over 60 children learning piano, guitar, ukulele, recorder, violin and drums. If you are interested in signing your child up for lessons, [click here](#).



Weekly classroom music lessons, using the Sing Up curriculum.

Our Year 4 pupils always enjoy participating in the annual DASP music singing project in spring and learning an instrument in partnership with the Dorset Music Hub in the summer term.

Many of the children in Copper Base enjoy using our music room each day and using their musical skills and interests to communicate.

We would love to get some parents in to perform to the children in 2024. If you have a hidden musical talent and would like to share it with your child's class, year group or even the whole school, please contact Mrs Hardisty for more information.

Hello and Goodbye

This term we had some sad goodbyes to class TAs Mrs Newberry and Mrs Waters who are very much missed already! Thank you both for your dedication and hard work in your classes.



Mrs Heal has left after 27 years of amazing work in our school. Your experience, calm approach and huge amount of knowledge has left a very big hole - enjoy your well earned retirement.

Lastly, Mrs Jones our fabulous IT technician is leaving after 11 years of keeping us all in chromebooks, safe online and generally looked after in all things technical. There is definitely a Mrs Jones shaped hole in our lives!

We have been delighted to welcome Ms McCourt, Mr Dennis-Andrews and Mrs Jones. They have already settled in and become part of our amazing team.



Attendance

Attendance - thank you for your support with our aim to get all children into school every day and give them the best chance with their learning. In general, school attendance is **95.8%**. Here is the year group attendance:

F - 95.9

3 - 96.3

2 - 95.1

1 - 95.8

4 - 96.0