

Damers News

December
2024



Is it Christmas already?! This term has been long, but seems to have whizzed by in the last few weeks when things have got really very Christmassy in school... We have decorated classrooms, our grand tree in the Big Hall and another beautiful tree in the Heart Space kindly donated by Mr Lowe - thank you! We even had an early visit from Santa!

The children have been absolutely brilliant in their Christmas productions! The Year 3 and 4 carol services on Tuesday were just magical in St Mary's Church. The children were word perfect and sang their hearts out with such confidence and joy. We really enjoyed the production of We're going on a Star Hunt by the Foundation classes - they have only been in school for 11 weeks and already wonderful with their words and songs! Year 2 did a wonderful production of A Christmas Carol, again with enthusiasm, really getting into the parts! Finally, Year 1s performed a wonderful journey around the world at Christmas visiting Australia, Poland, Japan among other countries to see the traditions - just fantastic! This is really what Damers School is all about - showing all that character and creativity. Thank you for all your support as always.

The PTA ran their amazing Secret Shop for all 475 children again this year - around 1500 presents wrapped for the children to choose from for their families. It was so carefully thought out and selflessly done with the Damers big heart.

Thank you to all volunteers whether they have helped in school with so many activities the children have enjoyed or come along to help on our school trips. We really couldn't do it without you!

My warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!

Mrs Greenham
Head of School



FOUNDATION

Christmas has been creeping into the classrooms since the start of December. Our home corners are a big focus for improving speaking and listening skills. This month the children have enjoyed some festive props and talking about celebrations in their own homes. The trees are up and have been decorated and redecorated several times on a daily basis! We were excited to have a visit from the postmaster from The Buttermarket Post Office. The children loved buying their own stamps to stick on their envelopes and had lots of questions to ask about the postal service! We have made and written Christmas or winter cards and are walking to the post box to send them. Hopefully receiving a handmade card will be a lovely surprise for the lucky recipients. The children's first term at school has culminated in their Christmas performances. They showcased their singing and story telling skills in 'We're Going on a Star Hunt' making the staff extremely proud of how far they've come in a matter of weeks.



YEAR 1



Year one enjoyed going on their first Welly Walk of the year! We looked out for signs of Winter which included icy leaves and muddy puddles. In History this half term, the children have been learning about toys from the past. Special visitors enhanced our learning as the children saw and played with real toys from the past. They were inspired to make their own peg doll just like children long ago.



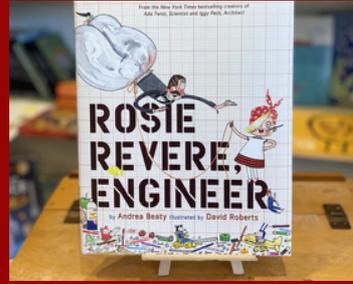
YEAR 2

Who can be an inventor?

We have had so much fun in Year 2 this term, thinking all about inventors. In literacy, we've read Rosie Revere, Engineer who embodied our school values of Resilience and ethos of sustainability, inventing gadgets out of recycled materials. We've enjoyed junk modelling and following and writing instructions for making hoop gliders and thaumatropes

In history, we've learned all about the Victorian engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel and how he transformed transport through designing tunnels, bridges and ships. We created our own tunnel books. In science, we've explored materials and tested different ways of making bridges.

And of course we've loved learning and performing the classic Victorian tale A Christmas Carol, singing, dancing and performing our lines with great enthusiasm.



YEAR 3

In Science we have been exploring forces. We stretched, blew, squeezed, folded, twisted and pulled pieces of paper in order to change its shape. We were able to categorise these into forces acting on the paper that involved pulling or pushing. We also challenged ourselves to make a paper boat (using push forces such as folding) that could float on water. This demonstrated upthrust and gravity - two non-contact forces working on the boat to ensure it remained afloat!



YEAR 4

Year 4 Science.

We have been investigating electrical circuits. We have discovered that the circuit needs to be continuous for electricity to flow, and to provide power to components such as buzzers, bulbs and motors. We had to make sure the metal parts were connected, not the plastic, that the batteries were facing the same direction and that the red and black wires were facing the correct way. It was tricky but exciting when we managed to get our circuits to work! We have also been practising our prediction skills and beginning to design an investigation on our own.

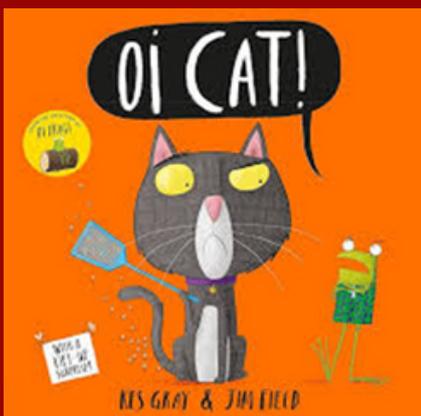


BASE NEWS

We have had a very busy half term reading stories all about animals. We have particularly enjoyed the "Oi" stories by Kes Gray and Jim Field. Our favourite was Oi Cat.

We have written silly sentences and invented new stories about animals.

We have ended the term with a festive visit to the secret shop and prepared for our Christmas cafe. Happy Christmas everyone.





In Year 3 we are all about times tables! This year we will consolidating our Year 2 learning of 2, 5 and 10s, and then learning and becoming fluent in 3, 4 and 8 too.

We have been trialing different ways of learning our times tables, including bingo and some fun crafts as well as more traditional (and effective) methods of skip counting.



Why not try some inventive ways to learn your times tables at home?

There are some brilliant games on these websites : [timetables](#) and [topmarks](#)



R.E AND JIGSAW

Year 3 and 4 performed at their Carol Concert held at St Mary's Church on Tuesday.

They sang their hearts out and each class recited a poem or story.



Jigsaw PSHE for next half term will be "Dreams and Goals."

Children will learn about Aspirations, how to achieve goals and understanding the emotions that go with this

Please see what we teach in our Personal, Social, Health and Economic lessons: [PSHE lessons](#)



Super Spotters

It's been a dramatic half term of weather with snow, ice and storm Bert. Luckily the weather has been settled enough for some of the children to pond dip and check to see if the creatures survived the pond being iced over. We still have an abundance of Water Hog Lice, Flatworms, Fresh Water Shrimp and Hair Worms so resilience in the Damers pond is strong.



Willow Facts!

- As it's so flexible, willow is used for weaving baskets, fishing nets, furniture and toys.
- People used to chew the bark of some willow varieties to treat inflammation and fever and is considered by many to be the predecessor to aspirin.
- Willows thrive in cool, moist conditions and are quite common around water bodies. In the summer when we haven't had rain, the willow tunnel at Damers will start to suck up the water from the small pond which is next to it!
- Willows shed their leaves in the winter and are one of the fastest growing trees in the world.

Whilst we're keeping warm and feasting with our loved ones don't forget to look after nature by feeding the birds, making sure wildlife has access to fresh water (especially when it's cold and water freezes), if you have a garden keep some piles of leaves about so mammals and insects can keep warm and safe.

If you have any nature spots you'd like to share please email superspotters@damers.dorset.sch.uk

It's the time of year to trim back the willow tunnel down at the pond where the new growth put on over the summer is shooting up into the sky. Rather than waste this amazing resource we have been making festive star decorations.

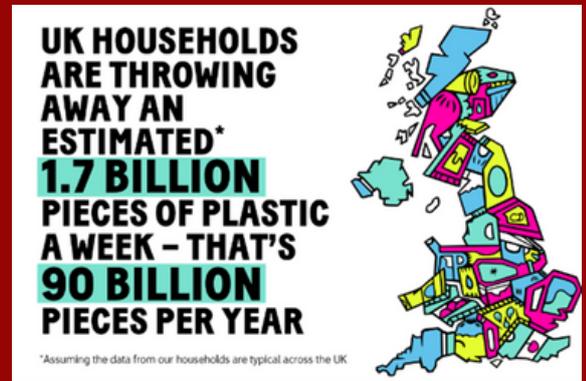




Meet our Eco Team for 2024/25! They have got to work straight away, discussing what is worrying us most about our environment and coming up with some exciting projects.



One of the team's biggest concerns has been single use plastic waste. The team are hoping to try and change habits so we don't cause so much plastic waste and damage to the environment. Last March in our Big Plastic Count we collected just under 6,000 pieces of plastic in one week and the children are hoping we can reduce this.



One of the first steps was to start designing a new Eco Code poster for school. The last one was introduced around 5 years ago by Mr Moore and his crew so an update and some new ideas was on our agenda. The children wanted to include doable tips and share their eco concerns to everyone in school.

We are working on designs and have involved Nick Morris From Wallis Agency in Dorchester. Nick will revisit us in January and help us finalise our new poster ready for printing.

We have also started talking to some local super markets as they produce a lot of plastic packaging that we buy. We will be asking some very awkward questions when we invite the shop managers in to talk to the Eco Team in January!



PTA NEWS

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Wow what a half term! We all had such a brilliant time at the Damers Story Night. It was such a magical evening and we thank all of the children and families for their engagement and participation. We would also like to thank the wonderful staff at Damers for going above and beyond and making the event so special.

A huge thank you to everyone involved in the Damers Secret Shop. It takes a lot of hands and a special community to make it all work behind the scenes! If you helped with organisation, wrapping, labelling, setting up or were one of the amazing elves- you are incredible! The children had such a wonderful day full of excitement and joy. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Dorchester Community Church who very kindly hosted this wonderful event.

Our first second-hand uniform sale of the year raised over £200! As we have an abundance of stock, we are looking into how we can make this more easily accessible to you all. Watch out for updates!

PTA Pledges & Funding:

As part of our funding requests, we are pleased to announce that we will be supporting the volunteer gardeners at Damers who keep all of our vegetable beds so fruitful with £30 a month to subsidise bulbs, compost and new plants etc.

We are pleased to announce that the visualisers purchased by the PTA are now in classrooms and are being used to support teaching and learning effectively.

Upcoming PTA events:

21st January- PTA meeting- all welcome

31st January- Adult only Quiz & Fizz night

6th March- World Book Day

14th March- Home Clothes for Chocolate Donations

27th March- Easter Bingo



Goodbye!

Mrs Coles has been a part of our Damers Family, since 2016 when she joined us as a Midday Supervisor, this was when she was Miss Kerlake !

She then moved to her TA role in 2018.

We have seen her grow in this role during this time and her family has grown as well to include 2 beautiful girls and this year she became Mrs Coles.

Rayanna will be greatly missed and we all send her our best wishes.

She will be amazing in her next chapter.

Welcome

This term we said Hello to 3 new members of our support team
Miss Muavono, Mrs Wright and Mrs Smith



Welcome to our Damers family

Thanks to everyone who helped us win the largest grant available from the Tesco Community Fund (The Blue Tokens). We are going to use this money to help us build an outdoor sensory garden and gym. This will hopefully be up and running by the Spring Term.

We raised £294.92 for the Poppy Appeal in November
Thank you to everyone who donated

Tag Rugby Festival

Well done to the Year 4 children who took part in the Tag Rugby Festival. They had a great time learning the skills and competing against other local schools.



**EXTRA!
EXTRA!**

Bling your Bike

What a fantastic turn out for our Christmas Bling Your Bike event. The children had a wonderful time parading their bikes/scooters to the rest of the school. It was a very festive morning.

At Damers we want to encourage as many children to cycle and scooter to school as possible. Cycling to school is healthy, good for the environment and cheaper than car travel. It means there will be fewer cars at the school gates and above all, it's great fun! Thank you to everyone for your participation in this.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Why is school attendance so important?

Attending school **regularly** helps to build **confidence** and develop vital **life skills**



School



is the **key** to **future success!**

Missing **2 days** of school each month



Missing nearly **3 weeks** during a school year



15 minutes

late every day



two weeks

of learning lost each school year

Data shows pupils with more than

95%

Achieve better GCSE results!

at least one grade higher!



Even **90%** attendance is still 19 days of education lost in a school year



ATTEND! AIM HIGH! ACHIEVE!

Reminder: if your child is away, they may miss vital learning that isn't revisited - try to book holidays in holiday time if you can!

F - 95.0%

1 - 96.4%

2 - 97.1%

3 - 96.7%

4 - 93.9%

GOVERNORS



As we approach the festive season, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate the vibrant spirit of our Damers First School community. Over the past few weeks, as they have for the whole term, the children have truly shone, reminding us all of the joy, creativity, and togetherness that this time of year brings.

The recent class performances have been nothing short of magical. From the youngest to the oldest pupils, every child brought their own sparkle to the stage, showcasing their hard work, unique personalities and talents. These shows celebrated the diversity and inclusivity of our school, blending stories, songs, and traditions that reflect the rich tapestry of cultures within our Damers family.

A highlight of the season was, of course, our wonderful Carols evening. It was heartwarming to see so many of you gathered, to witness the joyous carolling. Events like this truly embody the spirit of community, and it was a joy to share in the festive cheer with children, parents, and staff alike. A huge thank you must also go to our incredible PTA, whose tireless efforts bring so much joy and support to our community. The Secret Shop was, as always, a resounding success, giving the children a chance to experience the excitement of choosing thoughtful gifts for their loved ones.

A special thank you goes to all the staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make these events possible. Your dedication ensures that these cherished moments are ones the children and adults alike will remember for years to come.

Finally, on behalf of the Governing Body, I wish every family in our Damers community a peaceful and joyful festive season. Whether you are celebrating Christmas, another tradition, or simply taking this time to reflect and rest with those that matter the most, may your holidays be filled with warmth and happiness.

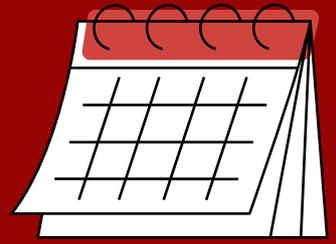
We look forward to seeing you all in the New Year, ready for more adventures, learning, and shared memories.

Jonathan Dunne
Chair of Governors





Upcoming Dates



- Monday 6th January - Inset Day
- Tuesday 7th January - Start of Term
- Wednesday 15th January - Foundation Stay and ...
- Tuesday 28th January - Year 1 Stay and ...
- Monday 3rd - Friday 7th February - Parents evenings
- Tuesday 4th February - Year 2 Stay and ...
- Wednesday 5th February - Year 3 Stay and ...
- Thursday 6th February - Year 4 Stay and ...
- Friday 7th February - Number Day
- Friday 14th February - Last Day of Term
- Monday 24th February - First Day Back at School.

Merry
Christmas