

School Development Plan Update December 2024

A reminder that our school strategic priorities can be found here:

<https://www.dhsb.org/school-strategic-priorities>

An overview of our current school development plan and updates on previous plans can be found here:

<https://www.dhsb.org/sdp-update>

1 Students achieve their highest academic potential

Expectations for excellence in the classroom and outside the classroom

Excellent Work

We continue to publish Excellent Work in the Head's Blog each week to show the diversity and excellence of what students are doing. The example below is from October.

Thank you to Ms Charlton for sharing some examples of Excellent Work from her Year 11 English class.

Firstly Max Phillips volunteered to present to students at the Creative Writing Club about tips and techniques for writing creatively. He's currently writing a novel that he's been working on for two years and is now editing his second draft, so he's incredibly passionate about writing! Max hopes to study English at university.



Secondly, Ms Charlton has shared Neel Shivane's recent English Language Paper 1 Question 5 exam-style response, which got into the top level on the exam mark scheme. The response is really well-crafted, with a range of language and structural devices to engage the reader.

Copied below are his original piece and a typed up version which Ms Charlton used as a model with the class.

She said, "Together we annotated where the example met the mark scheme".

Language Paper 1 Section B: Writing Assessment

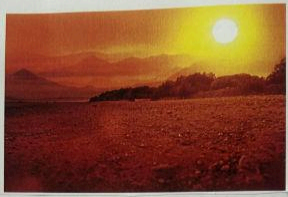
05 A magazine has asked for contributions for their creative writing section.

Either

Write a description of a very hot place as suggested by this picture:

or

Write a story about a disagreement.



24/09/24

In the corner of my eye, I glimpse a rapid flapping of wings. Like razors, talons stretch out, clawing at the dry air ahead. Suddenly, in a crimson flash, the vulture swoops and extracts its prey before disappearing ominously into the sunset. Creature of hell.

Fatigued and sweating profusely, I trudge on over the amber landscape of rolling dunes and shrubbery. Low on the horizon, the incandescent copper sun ~~is~~ is a malignant artillery. Inexorably, its lethal ammunition tortures and batters and smashes anything below. I persist. I remain determined. In order to keep my mind off of the predicament I find myself in, I cast my mind to the past.

It was a ~~dark~~ humid afternoon. I wandered aimlessly through the dense undergrowth of a tropical rainforest. Vivid trees, blood tall and proud - sheltering entire ecosystems beneath

their layered canopies. Bustling wildlife was everywhere. Everywhere I looked a frog would croak, a bee would buzz, an elephant would trumpet in joy. After a while, the sky turned grey the colour of graphite.

Rain relentlessly hammered down. It seemed as if the gates of heaven had opened. However, nature failed to cease. Stubbornly above the racket of the rain, cicadas chattered, predators prowled and ~~apes~~ apes howled. Insects that had once been shrouded by the thick brown mud emerged.

Then it was gone.

As I observe the gloomy, moon-lit terrain around me, I see no trace of what once was here. In the night sky, constellations glitter intermittently. My hair stands on end. An icy hostile wind is picking up and the buckets I sweated during the day feel cold and clammy on my blistered skin. Looking up, a silvery full moon glares at me, mercilessly. It's delighted by my endless torment. It casts its pale glow over the desert - suffocating me in its grasp.

Unable to continue further, I keel over on the sand. In the corner of my eye I glimpse a rapid flapping of wings. Talons stretched out, the vulture swoops. The last thing that I see before it's upon me is the moon's satisfied smile. I sigh in resignation.

Creature of hell.

[Link to assessment example](#)

Well done to both Max and Neel.

Subject area whole school enrichment

European Modern Foreign Languages Day

During morning tutorial students participated in a language trivia quiz, testing their knowledge and sparking an interest in learning new languages, and teachers introduced foreign languages in their classes throughout the day.

It was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to embrace the richness of Europe's languages and cultures.



3 Embracing inclusion and diversity

Celebrating success

In September we were delighted to have our annual speech day. This was a brilliant opportunity to celebrate student achievements and an opportunity to present awards from the last academic year.

In the afternoon we welcomed our current students and their families with canapés on their arrival made by students under the guidance of Mrs Ware and Mrs Dean.



During the afternoon Eden Hingston spoke about her time as School Captain. She concluded that education is what makes a person and added, "In some ways the last year at DHSB has made me. I hold

genuine excitement for the next generations of students to experience and learn from this school, and discover the ways in which their education will make them, or how the fire in their mind will be ignited".



Many thanks to former student Maddie Hall who presented the awards. Maddie is currently the Content Production and Specialist Facilities Lead in Real Immersive at Real Ideas Organisation, based at the Devonport Market Hall. She spoke about career paths not always being linear and encouraged students to accept challenges and look for opportunities.



Later in the day we enjoyed the company of our Year 13 leavers with time to catch-up over a buffet supper before they take up their next steps.

Maddie also took part in our evening event, along with alumni Jonathan Cox, Matt Adams and Matt Smith, who returned to school to share their experiences and pathways since leaving DHSB.

They were able to pass on some useful advice and made themselves available to chat with our leavers during a fabulous buffet supper provided by Refuel staff.



During both events we enjoyed music performed by Tristan de Rochefort-Roper, Max Chapman, Molly Rayment, Will Wooller, Evelyn Wilkinson and Rebecca Chapman, supported by Mrs Luing-Holmes.



Remembrance

Many thanks to Mr Head, Mrs Flack and Year 7 students who created a stunning Remembrance display on our main school gates.

Staff and students designed, made and painted wooden poppies which they used to create a display which is visible to those driving or walking past our gates.

Special thanks to Mr Winstone and his family for providing the wreath.





Mr Berryman presented our whole school Remembrance Assembly on Monday 11 November.

He said, "It is vital that as a school community we remember the sacrifices made by service personnel to give us our freedoms today, especially in the context of current conflicts happening around the world".

The assembly focused on the comparison of the welfare state; what was fought for during the war and how it looks today. Mr Berryman spoke about the importance of remembering the wider concept of democracy and our freedoms.

During the assembly students were given time to reflect on what Remembrance means to them and the prefect team read the names on the DHSB Roll of Honour before a minute of silence.

Special thanks to Noah Evans for recording, editing and publishing the assembly.

You can view the assembly here <https://youtu.be/bmZO421Nw>

Embedding our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

We recently hosted the Diana Award Anti-Bullying Ambassador training for schools across the South West with over 100 students from eight schools on site.

At DHSB we now have another 15 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors to add to our fantastic team.

Well done to all who took part.



Equality Project

We are excited to announce that the Plymouth Racial Equality Council will be supporting DHSB in a new project.

We will be working with equality and representation of students from a global majority in school, an inclusive curriculum with student input, steering groups of student voice, and parent/carers forums.

We are looking for students to be involved in a new steering group, regularly meeting and creating opportunities and celebration of all students in school, and we are delighted to be opening up an initial meeting for parents and young people who would be interested in contributing and/or being part of this project.

The initial open forum is to meet the representatives from the Plymouth Racial Equality Council (PREC) and staff involved, and find out more information or volunteer lived experience of racial discrimination.

You can read more about our approach to Equality on our website at this link.

<https://www.dhsb.org/about>

And this link will take you to our published strategy document.

[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy \(EDI\) 2023 - 2028](#)

Rail Safety Award

We were proud to receive the Rail Safe Friendly bronze award, following a dedicated focus on rail safety as part of our PSHE curriculum, writes Mr Scott.

Throughout the year, teachers have delivered engaging workshops across all year groups, raising awareness of key safety messages. The sessions covered topics such as understanding the dangers near railway tracks, the importance of staying alert at crossings, and safe behaviour when travelling by train.

These workshops emphasised the vital role students play in their own safety, both when commuting and when in proximity to railway infrastructure.

Receiving the bronze award reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring our students are well informed and responsible. This achievement is a testament to the hard work of staff and students alike in building a safer school community.

We look forward to continuing this important work as we aim for further recognition in rail safety and we would like to invite parents, students and all members of our community to watch the video that will be shared across our year groups in the coming weeks. It takes just a minute to register, and about 13 minutes to watch.

<https://learnliveuk.com/network-rail-secondary-school-safety-talk/>



Primary Scholars

We have seen the welcome return of our KS2 mentoring initiative, Primary Scholars. This year we are expanding our invitation to all Year 5 students who would like KS2 consolidation or 11+ preparation, and to all genders.

We welcomed the new students in for the first block and we are excited to see the introduction of the Atom Learning platform in place from next week. This will allow all students a wealth of resources to aid them and a DHSB mentor to support them through the process. Pupil Premium students are able to access this learning platform free of charge.

Our DHSB mentors were brilliant in their roles, each having valuable ideas and strategies to share with their students. They demonstrated great leadership and were warm and approachable.

We are currently taking bookings for the next block of Primary Scholars.

Please follow this [link](#) for more information and to express interest in a place for your child.

The next block will be on Monday afternoons at 15:45 - 16:45 from 13 January 2024 to 10 February 2025



4 Leadership and communities

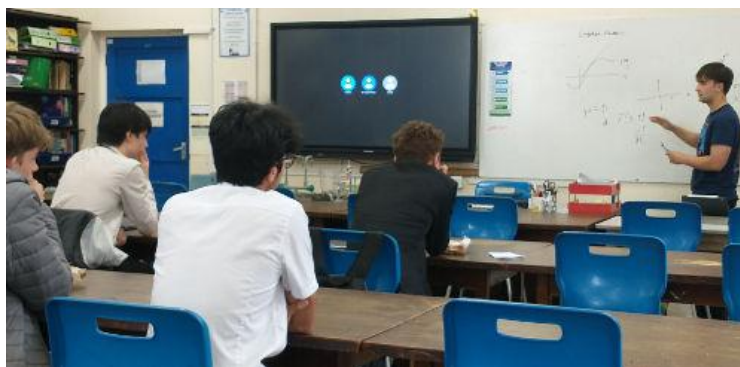
All students get diverse cultural experiences.

Create a DHSB Arts Award to encourage engagement with extra capacity for creative performance and clubs

Physics Society

The DHSB Physics Society was pleased to see Tom Dobby returning at the end of his first year at Clare College Cambridge.

Dr Colvile said, “Tom presented a short seminar on Lagrangian Mechanics, followed by an opportunity also for prospective Maths and/or Oxbridge students to ask about what undergraduate maths is really like, as well as life in a Cambridge College in general”.



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

Duke of Edinburgh Award

We want to celebrate all the students who completed their DofE Award during the last year in bronze, silver and gold. Very well done to all for this significant achievement.

Their names are linked [here](#).

[Bronze Awards](#)

[Silver Awards](#)

[Gold Awards](#)

Gold expeditions 2024

16 of our Sixth Form students successfully took part in an expedition in Slovenia this summer, completing four days of self sufficient walking and camping in the Soca Valley. They were treated to beautiful scenery and hot temperatures, and we were really impressed by their resilience and positive attitude. The addition of white water rafting and a trip to Lake Bled made this a really enjoyable trip.

We also had 14 students take to the hills of Bannau Brycheiniog in South Wales. They completed their walking expedition during a surprisingly hot and dry week, and once again impressed us with their fortitude and energy. This year students have chosen adventurous activity providers in the UK, surfing and yoga in Portugal, cooking in the UK and in the Alps to name a few!

All these students also need to complete a minimum of six or twelve months volunteering and complete the physical and skill categories. They have chosen a range of volunteering activities, including helping out at youth organisations, charity shops, and community cafes.



Abbot's Way Walk

On Sunday 6 October, six teams of DHSB students embarked on the 23 mile Abbot's Way Walk, a traverse of Dartmoor from Buckfast Abbey in the east to Tavistock in the west.

All 31 students demonstrated a blend of stamina, determination, navigational skills, teamwork and resilience to complete the distance, contending with heavy rain and foggy conditions.

Congratulations to all finishers, with a special mention to the team of Year 13 students Tom, Euan and Henry, who completed the distance in 5h33m, an improvement on the previous year's school record of 6h.



All finishing teams received a certificate, a badge and a sausage roll upon completion.

For many students, this walk forms the first stage of training for Ten Tors 2025, with further night navigation, day walks and weekend camps to follow.

At least four further teams included DHSB students past and present, walking independently or with other organisations. Our thanks are extended to DHSB staff and volunteers: Mrs Tyack, Mr Veale and Mrs Yeates, as well as the three Dartmoor Search and Rescue Teams who provided checkpoint staff along the route.

A New School Captain

William Henwood 12 KRB accepted the post following a rigorous selection process with an extremely strong field. I am sure he will be very successful in his new leadership role.

Our current School Captain, Eden Hingston, will provide support in a handover period during the next few weeks and later this term there will be time to thank her for her extensive contribution to the life of the school community.

Eden said, "William strongly impressed us all throughout the application process. In my opinion, he exhibited intelligence, charisma, moral character and articulacy. I'm excited to see his personal take on leadership and I'm sure he will excel in the role of School Captain. I look forward to working with Will in the weeks to come".



House Captains

After a busy start to the year in our newly expanded seven house system, we have concluded the search for our new team of House Captains with the appointment of 22 fantastic new leaders.

The process saw applications carefully written, references sought and the challenge of a face to face interview.

Our new young leaders were informed of their success on Monday and will get to work soon with updating the House boards, selecting their House charities, organising charity events, delivering assemblies and engaging with the wider house community.

Miss Cunningham said, "I was very impressed with the maturity and creativity on display during the application and interview process and I am very excited about working with the new team".

Our Captains are:-

Attenborough: Tom de Wilde, Otto Malm

Fleming: Sam Dykes, Rocky Travers, Sam Pearson

Johnson: Daisy Harris, Cameron Peryer, Melody Valentine

Leslie: Jonah Crawford, Esme Dunne, Fabian Manea, Maahil Munawwer

Scott: Ella Donnington, Eric Wang, Seb Brook, Reehana Ghale

Turing: Bailey Fry, Darcy O'Connor

Windsor: Giles Pahdi, Lydia Stone, Alex Oshinyemi, Billy Dent

We are also in the process of appointing our brand new team of Communications Captains. It's an exciting time in the DHSB Houses!



The Houses website has also been updated with information about all our new House figureheads and includes all our student leadership team, from School Captain all the way through to our tutor reps.

You can see the commendation profile of each house and also see which charities our houses follow.
[Link to the Houses website](#)



House Boards

C block was a hive of activity this week as our newly appointed House Captains designed and created their first house noticeboards. There were plenty of imaginative additions to the boards, all drawing on associations with their house figurehead.

I had the very enjoyable task of judging the displays this morning; here are the third, second and first placed houses.

Third place - Turing

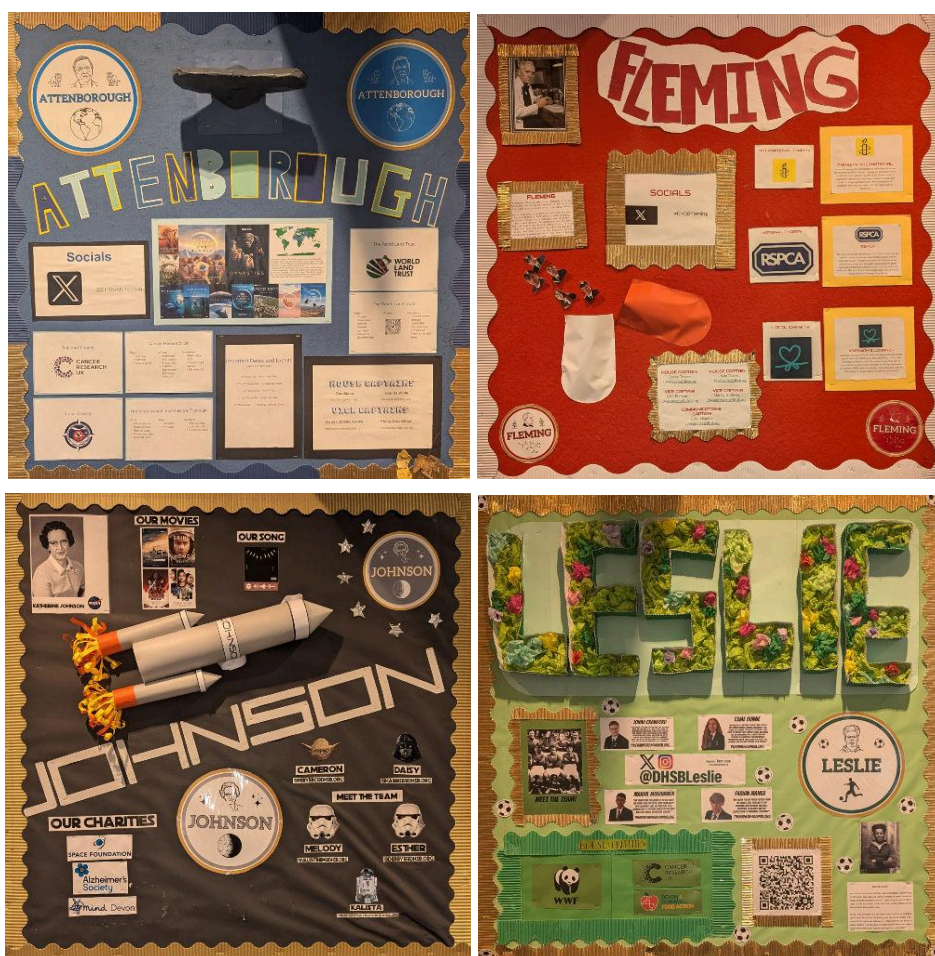
Second place - Attenborough

First place - Leslie

I think this has been the highest standard across all the boards for a very long time. I was really impressed and it was extremely difficult to rank the boards in overall achievement.

All seven boards are pictured below.

Miss Cunningham added, "It was clear to see how engaged the captaincy teams and other prefects were in this process. There was a real sense of competition in the air this week and this bodes well for a dynamic and fruitful fundraising year with the team. I can't wait".





House Communications Captains

Our social media team has now been assembled and Miss Cunningham is very proud to introduce the very first team of Communications Captains at DHSB.

The house captaincy team has been expanded to include this vital new role in the current world which will see our young leaders take charge of the online presence for their house.

This will include monitoring and posting on X on behalf of their house and developing our Instagram presence this coming year. It's a hugely creative role with links to some very exciting and prominent careers in the working world.

Our Communications Captains are Isaac Davey, Elsie Maguire, Kalista Senaratne-Niland, Tom Jane, Evie Faith, Beau Harrison and Morgan Martin.

Please follow our houses on X if you don't already.

DHSBAttenborough, DHSBFleming, DHSBJohnson, DHSBLeeslie, DHSBScott, DHSBTuring, DHSBWindsor.



Charities

Our Houses regularly support charities through their activities such as Mufti days.

The one we held in October was particularly colourful. Normally we see all the colours of the rainbow on show, but perhaps a little more purple than usual!

Well done to Connor Monteith 7S (pictured below) who was just one of the students wearing purple to school this morning.

As a school community we have chosen to lend support to a local charity [Luna's Fund](#) which is a baby loss and pregnancy after loss charity offering practical and emotional support to bereaved parents and expectant parents in Plymouth, Truro and the surrounding areas.

We are proud of our students' empathy and understanding with an issue as sensitive as this. Some students asked questions in an incredibly thoughtful way and learnt about an issue that they may have been unaware of until now.



Increase and revitalise the extracurricular offer and trips/experiences.

Plymouth School Sports Partnership School Games Mark



The PE Department has once again been awarded the Plymouth School Sports Partnership School Games Mark (Platinum Award) for sports provision and levels of participation.

In summary this is a citywide recognition of the breadth of extra curricular sport offered at DHSB and the high numbers of students who participate.

Sports Leaders

Our sports leaders have recently taken part in their final training and attended the Plymouth sports leadership conference where they developed key leadership skills across a wide range of activities to be able to fulfil their role at DHSB.



Rugby

Congratulations to the U16 teams who competed in the Plymouth Schools tournament at the end of last week. The U16 Bears finished runners up winning four games and losing just one, and the U16 Chiefs won the tournament winning all their games.



5 Shaping our futures

Improving our internal and external environment through investing more resources and energy into achieving an excellent environmental and sustainable ethos towards a net-zero strategy.

Climate Change Action Plan

In September we introduced students to our plans for sustainability and the creation of our Climate Change Action Plan (CAP).

The Department for Education has advised all educational establishments to have a CAP in place by 2025 and we are partnering with Students Organising for Sustainability UK (SOS-UK) to have our students front and centre in this process.

Students have seen the plans for workshops on green careers, biodiversity, decarbonisation and resilience and adaptability. All students have been invited to put themselves forward to be involved with the sessions across the year which will see the creation of the DHSB Climate Change Action Plan.

The next step of this project is that we recently welcomed Zeinur Bimukhan from Plymouth University and SOS-UK.

Zeinur led the first session with our newly created Climate Action Team (CAT mascot incoming!) which comprised of Alvaro Acevedo, Lucas Busuioc, Ethan Ferguson, Jacob Gray, Jacob Green, Euan Greenfield, Konrad Grzeskowiak, Dexter Kennaway, Archie Martin, Harry McCulloch, Dan Moulding, Zach Ross, George Shaw, Abdullah Siddique and Elvis Sullivan.

Our students were enthusiastic about creating a more sustainable DHSB; lots of great ideas and more to come. The next session will be in November and we will start looking more closely at careers and biodiversity.



Bite Back Project

This week we launched the Bite Back project to our Year 8 students. This is a youth-led movement empowering students to take action against the deceptive tactics of the food industry. The project began with an assembly led by inspiring youth activists, introducing students to the hidden injustices in our food systems. Through a series of workshops, students will investigate food culture and collaborate with peers, teachers, and caterers to design solutions that prioritise student health.

After these initial sessions, a dedicated team of "School Food Champions" will take the lead, applying their newfound knowledge of leadership, campaigning, and advocacy to drive meaningful change, both in school and local communities.

The Bite Back project challenges the food industry's manipulative practices, such as deceptive marketing, misleading packaging, and relentless promotion of unhealthy food choices. Students involved in the project will become informed about these tactics and learn how to advocate for a fairer food system that prioritises the health and well-being of young people.

The program aims to make nutritious food more accessible while developing critical skills in young leaders, such as teamwork, public speaking, and project management. Participants join a nationwide movement of over 200 schools, working collectively to inspire a healthier generation. The project also highlights the importance of youth voice and social action in tackling systemic challenges in food accessibility and health inequality.

This launch marks Devonport High School for Boys' commitment to fostering a health-focused school community. For students and staff, the initiative offers a unique opportunity to address pressing societal issues while shaping a healthier future.

Contact

For further information about the Bite Back project at DHSB, please contact Claire.Parkes@dhsb.org and visit <https://www.biteback2030.com/>

Let's work together to create a food system that supports the health and well-being of young people!



Broadening Horizons

We recently hosted the Broadening Your Horizons careers event, where students and parents had the opportunity to explore a range of post-16 options, including apprenticeships, T-levels, and vocational courses.

Expert speakers included Sharron Robbie on apprenticeships, Morven Maclean from Building Plymouth, Naomi Solomon from Cornwall College Group, Donna Harrison, and Paris Netherton from City College Plymouth.

Their insights into various career paths helped our students gain a clearer understanding of the options available to them after school.

Mr Scott said, "We're grateful to everyone who attended and supported this valuable event; empowering our students to make informed decisions about their futures".



New regular careers talks

Carrousel - Red Bull Powertrains

We have set up a new regular carousel careers talk, former student Bryony Venn presented to Year 9 to Year 13 students about her career since leaving DHSB - first as an engineer at Leonardo Helicopters, and now as a materials engineer at Red Bull Powertrains.

Students were fascinated to learn about her journey, and it especially piqued the interest of some of our Sixth Form girls who are keen to explore a similar path.

Bryony brought with her Versteppen and Perez gloves, boots, suit and helmet, as well as an F1 steering wheel.

The students loved trying them on and taking lots of photos of the event.

Next term, students can opt to attend workshops with one of the following companies: Devon Chambers, University Campus of Football Business, Babcock International, British Army, Spaceport Cornwall, AECOM and Great Western Railway.

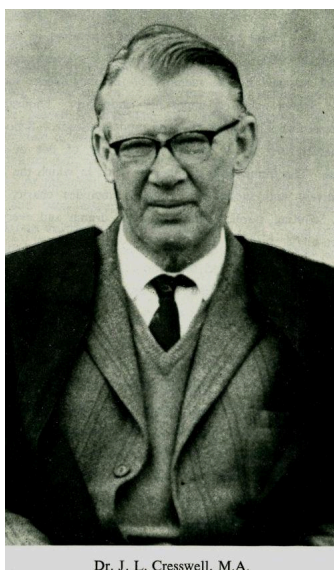


Alumni

Remembering Dr Cresswell

Thank you to Mrs Kinsella who has compiled this tribute to Dr Cresswell.

This month we remember and pay tribute to our sixth Headteacher, Dr John (Jack) Leslie Cresswell MA DPhil who passed away 50 years ago in September 1974 – still serving DHSB. Doc Cresswell, as he was affectionately called, was the Head from 1953 - 74. He was 'a tall figure with a shy smile and a slight, scholarly stoop.' The School Magazine described him as 'a scholar and a gentleman, and a man of broad and human sympathy, kindness and courtesy. To balance all these, he has the forthright qualities of the Yorkshireman.'



The 1974 School Magazine records, 'From the moment of his arrival, he showed a profound concern for the reputation and progress of the School, both in academic and sporting spheres, and this concern never lessened, even during his long illness and during the closing weeks of his life.'

Dr Cresswell's most lasting legacy which will be enjoyed indefinitely is the filling in of Stonehouse Creek resulting in our outdoor recreation space and the subsequent 3G all weather pitches (astroturf) which are enjoyed by the students and the wider community.

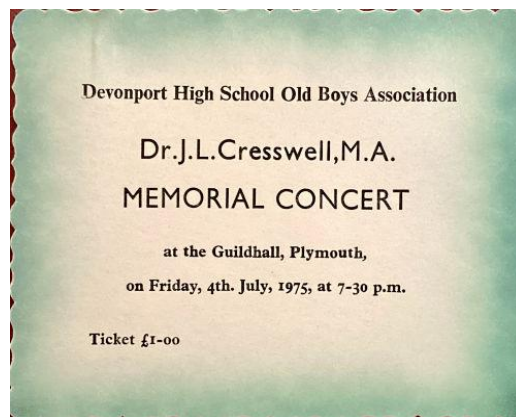


During his time in Plymouth Dr Cresswell was a loyal and active citizen. His interest in painting led him to become Secretary of the Plymouth Arts Club. Two of his paintings of Buckland Abbey are shown here - kindly donated by Dr Cresswell's daughter Sheilah.



Dr Cresswell was a staunch supporter of the grammar school and loyally upheld the traditions that made Devonport High School so successful. It was under his leadership that the school became one of the most respected in the West Country and, as Mrs Cresswell said at the time, that is the memorial which he would value most. In his own words, his aim was, 'To make the school the finest of its kind in England.'

Such was the respect for Dr Cresswell that a memorial concert was held for him in the Plymouth Guildhall which was offered for use free of charge.



Please read our most recent Alumni newsletter here <https://secure.smores.com/n/8u5nm>

6. Creative spirit and innovative thinking

Raising Digital Engagement

DHSB tops the charts in Sparx Maths and Sparx Reader.

You will be aware that each week we celebrate the highest performing students in two of our core home learning platforms - Sparx Reader and Sparx Maths in our weekly Head's Blog..

As we near the end of this half term it seems appropriate to look a little more widely and acknowledge the tremendous effort that both students and subject staff have invested.

We are proud to report that we have been ranked in the top 2% of schools nationally for our outstanding performance in Sparx Maths and Sparx Reader. Our students' dedication to independent learning and their commitment to using these platforms have been instrumental in achieving this remarkable success.

Sparx Maths

- Over 95% of our students consistently complete their Sparx Maths tasks on time, placing us in the top 2% of schools nationwide.
- This dedication has directly contributed to our exceptional GCSE Maths results.

Sparx Reader

- Our students have logged an impressive 5000+ hours of reading time this year alone.
- Over 1000 books have been read, with students in Years 7-10 averaging 50 minutes of reading per week.
- This commitment to reading has also secured us a place in the top 2% of schools nationally, with a 93% completion rate.

We are incredibly proud of our students for their hard work and dedication. Their achievements demonstrate the values of Intellectual Rigour and Resilience that are at the heart of our school.

We also do not underestimate the huge role that families play in supporting students so thank you for all your ongoing support.

