

Dame Elizabeth
CADBURY
Headteachers
BLOG



Topic Day Natural High Workshops

Our topic days are a fantastic way in which our curriculum is enriched, broadened and enhanced. Pupils benefit from a whole day immersed in topics not ordinarily taught in the normal curriculum.

A recent topic day saw many pupils taking part in workshops from an external company called Natural High who deliver drugs education in schools. Pupils gained so much from these workshops and the feedback we have received from the company is worthy of sharing with you:

"I just wanted to send you a message to say how fantastic your students were on Wednesday, in fact they were so good I mentioned to them at the end of the show that they were one of the best year groups I have ever had at DEC. This prompted me to look back through my schools list to find out how many years I've been visiting the school for. Would you believe that my first visit was on 9th November 1999 where I did 3 shows to Year 7, 8 and 9 so I'm pretty sure that if some of your Year 7 students when home and told their parents that a few of them would have seen it when they were at school lol.

Your pupils are an absolute credit to the school, their engagement, participation and attitude was superb and the feedback from teachers and pupils has been so positive.

Many thanks again for your continued support to Natural High and I do hope to return next year"

Well done to all pupils for their superb contributions during the day.

RAF Combined Cadet Force – up, up and away!

We were delighted to be able to take our new cadets flying for the first time. Many were kitted up in the air at RAF Cosford with a few taking control of their very first aircraft. Mr Norton was immensely proud of his cadets and can't wait to take the next group for their first flying experience.

It won't be long now until our RAF uniforms are delivered, and cadets will be able to wear their CCF uniforms each Monday instead of their school uniform. If your son or daughter is interested in becoming a Cadet, encourage them to speak to Mr Norton or simply drop into Parade on Monday's after school in the Gym.

Year 11 Revision and Mock Examinations

The second round of Mock Examinations begin on Monday 10th February. This will be the final set of practice exams completed by Year 11 before the real things in the summer. Parents have benefited from a workshop on revision so they can find out more on how to support their son/ daughter to revise effectively at home.

The resources on the Year 11 Revision section of our website have been carefully tailored to ensure pupils have the best quality resources to prepare, and the most precise practice materials – practice makes perfect!

For more information, visit: www.decschool.co.uk/year-11-revision

Pupil Pledge Launch

Perhaps the biggest news of all this month is the hugely successful launch of DEC Pupil Pledge.

Here is what Pupil Pledge achieves:

- To provide essential knowledge and experiences that pupils need to be well rounded, balanced, educated citizens
- To provide pupils with knowledge and experiences which engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement; inspiring them to make a difference now and in their adult lives
- To develop the whole child, bringing out the best in them and preparing them for adult life
- To develop character, resilience, and unlock hidden talents
- To provide a tangible set of opportunities which enhance pupils' academic curriculum in providing holistic educational experience that addresses social disadvantage and addresses gaps in pupils' knowledge and/ or cultural capital
- To provide a 5 year programme of coherently planned, age related experiences which develop cultural capital, SMSC, physical and intellectual development
- To develop character and confidence so pupils can 'hold their own' in a range of social or professional circumstances
- To inspire students to actively and independently seek positions of responsibility, learn new skills, push themselves outside their comfort zone, aspire to be the best they can be, and foster an appreciation and curiosity for vocational as well as academic pursuits.

Ask your child how many Pledge items they have crossed off their list!

Our Mobile Phone Policy

On our website there is a copy of our mobile phone policy together with the Department for Education's guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

Some of our newer parents have been surprised with the level of action we take to ensure pupils are safe online, including their own mobile devices. If we believe that a young person has acted in an unsafe way, or in a way which undermines the values of our school then we may confiscate their phone. Where our concerns are sufficient, we may also screen the phone. This includes any instance where their mobile phone has been found to be switched on in school.

Why do we do this?

- a. We want to protect children from the negative effects of un-monitored social media and smart phone usage
- b. We want all children to have time at school to enjoy freedom from social media and the pressures it brings
- c. We want to make sure that no child is exposed to inappropriate material or contact with unknown persons online
- d. We want to be confident that no one is ever photographed or videoed when in school

We ask and expect parents to support us in our safeguarding work – the easiest way to do this is to routinely check your child's phone. Parents should have pass codes and access to their child's apps. No matter what your child's age, they are still a child and you should check their phone. We have plenty of examples where unmonitored social media use negatively affects mental health, leaves pupils vulnerable to predatory people online, or at worst results in them making unsafe decisions such as sending inappropriate personal pictures via social media apps.

None of us want to think or suspect the worst of our young people but until they are adults, we all have to work together to monitor, teach and talk to them about how to use technology and social media safely. We say to pupils all the time: once you've put something on social media, it is there forever. Think before you act.

A useful article on one issue, sexting, can be found at: <https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/sexting.htm>

With best wishes



Mr M Dunn