

# DURRINGTON NEWSLETTER

Kindness | Aspiration | Perseverance | Pride

## 16th January 2026 edition

Happy new year! We hope you all had a super festive break and are looking forward to an exciting and fulfilling 2026. We are delighted to begin this newsletter by celebrating the wonderful progress our students are making with their reading. It has been a pleasure to see so many pupils engaging positively with books across the school, developing both confidence and enjoyment in reading. Thank you for the encouragement you continue to give at home—together, we can build on this momentum and inspire even more regular reading for pleasure and learning.

We are also proud of the success of our recent Languages Week. Students embraced the opportunity to explore new cultures and languages with enthusiasm and curiosity, and the buzz around school was a real

highlight. Something else we are incredibly proud of is that this Christmas was the 50th year of our Christmas hamper campaign. You can read all about it in this newsletter.

Finally, as we look ahead, we are beginning preparations for our upcoming Careers Day and would greatly value support from parents, carers, and members of our wider community. If you are able to volunteer your time or expertise, your involvement could make a real difference in helping our young people broaden their aspirations and understand the world of work.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our school community.

Shaun Allison &  
Chris Woodcock  
Co-Headteachers

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# Get Durrington Reading



The new reading window has opened for students and will run until the 9<sup>th</sup> March. Every student will be expected to read and log at least one book of 100 pages or more.

There is a new twist to this reading window. We are focusing on History. Students have the opportunity to earn 5 KAPP Aspiration points for every fiction or non fiction historical book they log. This will include biographies.

There will be a new button added to the book log form, asking whether the book they are reading is historical or not. If a student is unsure whether their book counts as historical, please speak to Mrs Dacosta in the library.

Let's explore History!

*Going beyond our best*

# The Winter Lecture Series

At the end of last term we were delighted to be joined by internationally recognised astrophysicist Dr Alex Maraio for the first talk in our series of winter lectures.

Dr Maraio is an ex-Durrington High School student who studied for his undergraduate degree at the University of Sussex before studying for his PhD at the Institute of Astronomy, University of Edinburgh.



Dr Maraio talked to our Oxford Scholars and year 11 Platinum Academy students about the physics of our universe, touching on concepts beyond the GCSE curriculum, including how science has proven the Big Bang Theory, dark matter, dark energy and black holes.

This week we were thrilled to welcome Professor Alan Lester, a leading researcher and renowned author in the field of historical geography based at Sussex University. The Professor delivered a fascinating talk to our Platinum Academy members, Oxford Scholar students and GCSE history and geography students exploring the impacts of the British Empire in the Indian Ocean World. The lecture mirrored the second lecture that Professor Lester's undergraduate students would receive, giving students a great insight into university learning.



We would like to thank both Dr Maraio and Professor Lester for coming in to deliver their inspiring talks and we look forward to welcoming them back for future events.

*Super Curriculum @ DHS*



# DHS Careers Day Volunteer Appeal

Do you enjoy your job, career or sector? Would you be able to come into school for a day and talk about your job or industry sector with our students? We are seeking volunteers from our parent, carer and local business community to join us on **Y10 Careers Day** which takes place on **Friday 6th February**. A key area we need volunteers for is The Job Game where you will have short, focussed conversations with pairs of students about your job or sector.



As part of our structured activities you will have the chance to share what you do in a positive way and inspire Durrington students as they explore a wide range of future careers and occupations. It can be the job, careers, role or sector that you are currently part of or one that you have done in the past. Check the [flyer here](#) for more information or [sign-up here](#).

## Year 7 Football Success!

Congratulations to the Year 7 football team who are through to round 6 (last 32 nationally) of the ESFA National Cup!

Durrington overcame an excellent St Oscar Romero team to reach the 6th round and will now play away vs Oakwood Park Grammar School, Maidstone.



*Team Durrington*

# Languages Week



This week, Durrington High School proudly celebrated **Languages Week**, with the Modern Foreign Languages team delivering a series of special assemblies across the Houses to highlight the value and importance of learning a new language.

Building on this theme, form tutors greeted their tutees each morning in a different language, creating a vibrant and inclusive start to the day. Greetings included Italian *Ciao*, German *Guten Tag*, Turkish *Merhaba*, Mandarin *Nǐ hǎo*, and Welsh *Bore da*.

Students also enjoyed a variety of fun and engaging lunchtime activities throughout the week. These included a language-themed treasure hunt, Spanish and French cinema experiences, an Italian taster session, make-and-play language games, and a quiz and tea party to bring the celebrations to a close.

*Modern Foreign Languages @ DHS*



# Thank you from Turning Tides



Thank you so much to everyone in your school community for their support this Christmas. It means so much and has made a big difference – enabling us to gift on bumper hampers to each of our 20 hostels/hubs and make up over 150 treat bags – all with the support of our busy volunteer elves!

On receiving one of the bags with donated items an individual who is currently rough sleeping said: “Thank you very much for this bag of goodies, also the Christmas present which I won’t open until Christmas Day. I haven’t had one of those in a long time.”

This Christmas Appeal is vital, and your support shows how much you care and this is felt by the people we support. Mealtimes bring people together – and your gifts help us do just that, especially at Christmas. From nutritious ingredients for home-cooked meals to easy-to-eat survival food, your donations will also allow us to feed more people over coming months, restore dignity, and improve well-being. We’re also able to continue to prepare welcome boxes filled with essentials like pasta and sauces for those moving into new homes as well as supporting personal hygiene.

*Celebrating 50 years*

# 50 years of Christmas Hampers



Here at the Donations Hub, our volunteers have been working tirelessly to unpack and distribute your donations and we are so appreciative of their support too.

We provide food and refreshments year-round to those rough sleeping, in temporary accommodation, and living in our residential projects across West Sussex. We support over 1,000 people each year – and that number is growing. Rising costs are making life harder, and many are struggling just to stay nourished and well. So as a recognised supporting school your continued help is more important than ever.

Thank you for your kindness.

Moira Gardner – Turning Tides Donations Officer

*Proud of DHS*



## Term dates

### Spring term 2026

Monday 5th January to Friday 27th March

#### Half term

Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February

#### INSET days

Thursday 22nd January, Friday 23rd January  
and Monday 9th March

## Clubs

Our full clubs list for the Spring term 2026 can be found [here](#).



## Diary Dates

- Year 11 mock exam results assembly - Tuesday 20th January
- Year 11 photo - Tuesday 20th January
- INSET day - Thursday 22nd January
- INSET day - Friday 23rd January
- Year 11 consultation evening - Thursday 29th January

*The Durrington Journey*



## KAPP awards

Our system of KAPP rewards and recognition ensures we are able to award students for going beyond their best in a variety of ways. You can nominate your child on the link [here](#).

## Sign up to our newsletter

- Our newsletter is sent out fortnightly to parents & carers and we aim to cover as much as possible from across the school. If your family and friends would like to receive our fortnightly editions they can sign up here: [Newsletter](#)

## Social media

Don't forget you can follow all the latest news on our social media pages:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Kindness | Aspiration | Perseverance | Pride



*Going beyond our best through  
Kindness, Aspiration,  
Perseverance and Pride*



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