

'A tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season'
(Psalm 1:3)



Wisdom - Hope - Service - Resilience

Issue 19

October 2025

The Deanery Way

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of Term 1, we reflect with pride on the many achievements and memorable moments that have shaped the start of this academic year. Our students have demonstrated exceptional character, resilience, and commitment across a wide range of activities both inside and outside the classroom.

We are delighted to share the overwhelmingly positive feedback we've received from members of the public regarding our students' behaviour and engagement during recent trips. Whether attending the Theatre in Cheltenham, enjoying the Orchestra at The Platform, or exploring the historic landscape of Avebury with our Year 7 cohort, our students have represented The Deanery with maturity, respect, and enthusiasm. Their conduct has made a lasting impression and reflects our values.

This term saw students rise to the challenge in activities such as The Happy Puzzle Company workshops and the Scrap Challenge, where they showcased impressive critical thinking, and teamwork. These experiences have helped develop essential life skills and highlighted the creativity and determination of our young people.

Congratulations to all students who have represented The Deanery in school teams and participated in performances this term. A special mention goes to those who took part in The Deanery Dash—your energy and school spirit have been inspiring!

We have been particularly impressed by the aspiration, preparation, and commitment shown by our Year 11 students during their Senior Leadership Team interviews. Their thoughtful contributions and readiness for the upcoming Mock Exams in November give us great confidence in their potential. We are hopeful for this cohort and proud of the example they are setting.

It's also worth reiterating the success of our previous Year 11 cohort, whose GCSE results were very strong. Provisional data indicates that The Deanery compares favourably both nationally and locally, a testament to the hard work of students and staff alike. These results can be viewed on-line on the school comparison website <https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>.

As we head into the half-term break, we wish all members of our community a restful and safe holiday. With fireworks and Halloween celebrations approaching, we encourage everyone to enjoy responsibly and look out for one another.

We look forward to welcoming students back on Monday 3rd November, ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges of Term 2.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Young'.

Mr Young
Executive Principal

Chaplaincy

Pilgrimages, Pumpkins and Remembrance

You may have seen the excellent 'Pilgrimage' series on the BBC, following a group of celebrities of a variety of faiths and world views taking a spiritual journey of a lifetime. Our Year 7's recently had a **pilgrimage taster** as part of their Humanities Avebury trip where we took time to reflect on the hidden burdens we carried. There was space to share these with fellow pilgrims if we wished before responding to the invitation heard in Jesus words to lay our burdens down and receive his rest. Knowing that not all burdens could be discarded so easily for those we needed to continue to journey with we asked for strength. Later we reflected at the foot of a remarkable set of trees on what kept us rooted, and on others whose lives had been uprooted, and where sandbags were used to protect the trees, what simple ways could we be like the sandbags to those we knew going through difficulties. The responses ranged from smile at them, sit with them, invite them to join our games, to talk with them, help them to talk to a teacher. These were beautiful walks, and it was a privilege to accompany the Y7's on their pilgrimage.



Over half term The Stowe Church will be holding several '**Pumpkin Parties**' for residents of Wichelstowe. We'll be in West Wichel (The Orchards) on Wednesday 29th October, East Wichel at The Bayberry on Thursday 30th and Middle Wichel (Canalside) at Hall and Woodhouse on Friday 31st. Each Pumpkin Party will have pumpkins available for carving and other activities for children to take part in and will take place between 10:30a.m. and mid-day. You're very welcome to come along, especially if you're new to Wichelstowe and looking to make friends with other local residents.

Finally, The Stowe Church will be holding a community **Remembrance service on Sunday 9th November** in the Kingfisher School Hall, access via the gate in the car-park. All are welcome to come along, our local Scout Group will be in attendance and the activities provided whilst coming from a Christian perspective will hopefully be suitable for people of all faiths and none. Refreshments will follow the service which will end at 11:45a.m. ish!

*Rev. Owen Green
Chaplain*

Service

“... in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others”



Operation Christmas Child

This year we are supporting Operation Christmas Child. Each tutor group will be putting together boxes of gifts, which will eventually be distributed to children across the world who might not receive any Christmas gifts at all.

If you are able to donate any items, please see the list on the right of appropriate items that can be included in the boxes.

SHOEBOX GIFT IDEAS



“WOW” ITEM

- Football with pump
- Doll
- Cuddly toy
- Large toy truck or car



TOYS

- Skipping ropes
- Yo-yos
- Toy cars
- Toys that light up and make noise (with extra batteries)

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Toothbrushes
- Washcloths
- Combs
- Hairbrushes
- Small water bottles



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Pens, pencils, sharpeners, crayons, and markers
- Notebooks and paper
- Colouring and picture books
- Solar calculators



ACCESSORIES

- Socks
- Sunglasses
- Jewellery and watches
- Wind-up torch (or torch with extra batteries)



DO NOT INCLUDE

Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items; war related items; seeds, gum, chocolate or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, sharp or fragile items.

Resilience

"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me"

In September Miss. Price, Mr. Oldroyd and Mrs. Gallagher completed a half marathon trek through the Cotswolds (and the rain!) all in aid of raising funds for the breast cancer awareness charity **CoppaFeel!** Between them they raised **over £1500!** A definite test of resilience but a wonderful accomplishment to raise money for the charity, which aims to educate and empower young people with knowledge and confidence to know their 'normal' and to advocate for their own health.



Periods aren't easy!

Girls can start their periods between the ages of 8 -17 but it all depend on the person. The world bank estimates that over 500 million young women and girls globally struggle daily to manage their menstrual health. Access to period products, education, and safe facilities remains a persistent challenge for many, preventing their full participation in school, work, and their overall wellbeing.



Our bodies are constantly changing and with periods, especially, you might never know when your period will come and whether you will be prepared. However, our school offers period products and advice everywhere!

Where to find support and products?

- Teachers
- Tutor and head of year
- NHS website
- The School Library has books about periods
- Period education UK - <https://www.periodeducation.org>
- Fellow classmates and School council members
- Student services has plenty of products and will always help

The wonderful Jess in Year 11 is on a mission to raise awareness about period poverty and to make The Deanery a period positive school.

She has been working hard completing surveys of students and staff, checking the building's facilities and access, delivering presentations to SLT and making posters to display around the school.

Jess is making a real difference in our school community and empowering young girls and women to not feel ashamed about their bodies but to feel confident and speak out if they're struggling.

"Our school is launching a Period Positive Campaign to help break the stigma around periods and make sure every student feels informed, supported, and comfortable. The campaign will include age-appropriate education, open conversations, and improved access to period products in school. Our goal is to create an environment where periods are seen as normal and nothing to be embarrassed about. By promoting understanding and inclusivity, we hope to empower all students and ensure that no one's learning or wellbeing is affected by something so natural."

"I was inspired to start this campaign after a personal experience in class when my period leaked and it was not handled in the right way. That moment made me realise how important it is for schools to talk openly and supportively about periods. I hope this campaign will spark change across our school and encourage no one to feel uncomfortable around the topic of periods"

Jess, Year 11

Wisdom

"Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding"

Tuesday 14th October, The Happy Puzzle Company came to The Deanery to work with yr7, 8 and 9 on team work, logical thinking, resilience and critical thinking skills. Pupils were presented with challenges which required listening and communication to solve the puzzles.

It was lovely to see students desperately trying to stop penguins from falling into icy water. Squeals of frustration could be heard as they tumbled with many hands trying to stop them.

The silence that fell on the room as a new puzzle hit the table was tangible and the concentration as each team tried to work together to solve the new puzzle was electric.

A joy to see so many of our students working collaboratively and showing wisdom, hope, service and resilience – well done to all who took part.

the
**Happy
Puzzle
Company**



The GCSE Music students were invited to The Platform last week along with other schools from Swindon to take part in a GCSE Music performance from the Bournemouth Sympathy Orchestra. The students took part in a workshop aimed at those studying GCSE Music. The event was a great success with students saying that the performance was fantastic and a different style of music that they would not have had the opportunity to listen to without this trip.

Hope

"I have come so that you may have life in all its fullness"



The GCSE Drama students, along with some interested Year 9s, visited the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham last week to watch a performance of *Blood Brothers*. The students really enjoyed their visit to the theatre with some students visiting a theatre for the first time. There were a range of emotions when watching the performance with some students very emotionally engaged in the performance they had seen. One Year 10 student said the roles were well casted and the staging was used really well to portray the story.

PE updates

This year students took part in the annual House Deanery Dash competition! This year we saw many school records broken and introduced a new route to our students.

The following students won their year group:

Yr7 Annie and Austin

Yr8 Oliver and Aniyah

Yr9 Russell and Lowri

Y10 Archie and Esther

Y11 Matt and Carys

A big well done to Resilience house who won the inter house competition placing 1st overall with 131 points with Hope placing 2nd place with a close 127.

We have 10 students in each year group selected to represent the Deanery in the upcoming Swindon School Cross Country competition.

Year 8 girls' football had the opportunity to represent the Deanery in the Utilita Cup held at Swindon Town Foundation Park. The tournament saw schools from Swindon and the south west compete in a football tournament which last year saw over 7000 girls take part in. Due to the Lionesses inspiring and paving the way for women's football the girls took part in this initiative to boost the women's game and to develop girls' football in the UK. Moving into term 2 the Deanery girls football teams have a lot to look forward to, the Year 7s, U14s and U16s have some cup games where we will be playing against schools from Chippenham and Salisbury.

"I think it was really good and I really liked the skeleton in the museum and it was really fun overall! :)"

Humanities trip to Avebury

"It was really fun!
Nothing negative"

"I really enjoyed the trip and it was amazing, I really liked the enthusiasm of the teachers at Avebury and the general excitement of the trip"

Earlier this month our Year 7s had the opportunity to visit Avebury – an ancient, Neolithic landscape and stone circle just outside of Swindon. All this term in their History, Geography and RE lessons, our newest additions to the Deanery community have been learning about this mysterious and special place, and exploring theories about why it might have been built, who lived there and how it connects people to their spiritual selves and nature. Half of the year group visited on the Tuesday and the other half went on the Wednesday and we were almost blessed with the weather, until we got slightly damp on the Wednesday! We completed a range of activities whilst we were there, including: visiting the Alexander Killier Museum with Miss Price (*History*); Visiting the stone circle and completing a traffic survey with Mr. Niel (*Geography*); Spending time in St James' church and the grounds with Mrs. Gallagher (*RE*); and then walking a mini pilgrimage across the landscape with Rev. Owen.

Our students made the staff exceptionally proud as they displayed impeccable manners, were polite and enthusiastic, and we even had members of the public comment on how lovely our students are. They really did proudly display our school values in the community! A big well done to all the students who came along, as well as a thank you to those staff members who gave up their time to help supervise and support the trip.

Mrs. Gallagher



Deanery Careers update

Careers Education, Information & Guidance programme

Welcome to the Term 1 Careers section! This term has been packed with exciting opportunities for our students to explore future career paths and develop essential skills

Y8 & Y9 Careers Insight Morning at Travis Perkins

Fifteen students from Years 8 and 9 participated in a challenge morning at Travis Perkins in Swindon. They explored careers in the construction industry and front-of-house roles including business, HR, and support functions. Students toured a kitchen design studio, learned about CAD (Computer-Aided Design), and heard inspiring career stories from staff across the company.

Y9 Online Talk from Anglian Windows

In September, some Year 9 students attended an online talk hosted by Anglian Windows. They learned about apprenticeship opportunities and the wide range of roles available within the company.

Y8 Scrap Challenge

Last week, all Year 8 students took part in a Scrap Challenge where they built environmentally friendly cities using recycled materials. The event encouraged creativity, collaboration, and teamwork. Business volunteers from the STEM sector supported the event, making it a great success.

Cirencester College Visit

At the end of September, Cirencester College visited our Year 11 students to discuss Post-16 options. The session was insightful and helped students understand the pathways available to them after Year 11.

Upcoming Visit to Commonweal 6th Form

At the end of Term 3, interested students will have the opportunity to visit Commonweal 6th Form. More information will be sent out in due course.

Careers PSHE Lessons and Guest Speakers

Year 11 students will begin their Careers PSHE lessons during Term 2 using the Careers Pilot platform. We are planning to host a variety of guest speakers from local colleges, 6th forms, and apprenticeship providers during Terms 2 and 3 to provide further guidance and inspiration. Other year groups will follow in Term 3 and beyond and we have some other exciting events and experiences planned for all year groups.

Mr. Hinson – Careers Leader

You're Invited: SEND Coffee Morning at The Deanery – Friday 14th November

We're delighted to invite you to our upcoming **SEND Coffee Morning** at **The Deanery** on **Friday 14th November**, from **9:00 to 11:00am**.

This informal event is a great opportunity to:

- Meet our SENDCo and Deputy SENDCo
- Learn more about how we support young people with SEND
- Ask questions, share experiences, and enjoy a cuppa with other parents

The coffee morning will be held in **The Cornerstone**, located just next to reception. Whether your child currently receives SEND support or you simply want to learn more, we'd love to see you there.

Attendance to date 92.6%

Our School Core Values and Attendance

Every day at school is a chance to live out our values and become the best version of ourselves.

Here's how **good attendance** connects to what we believe in:

Wisdom

Every lesson helps you learn something new. Being in school every day builds knowledge for your future.

Resilience

Turning up even when it's tough shows real strength. Each day in school is proof that you don't give up.

Hope

When you attend regularly, you invest in your dreams. Every day in class is a step toward your goals.

Service

By attending school, you support your teachers and friends. Being present helps our whole community grow together.

Safeguarding

As we approach the end of the first term of this academic year, we have become aware that the technical and digital world we live in is quickly evolving.

With the emergence of AI, it carries both advantages and disadvantages. AI will play a significant role in the future lives of your children, whether they use it directly or not.

The solution will not lie in banning children and young people from this technology, but instead, in implementing safety measures to protect them. Whilst we may automatically focus on the risks, it is important when talking with children, that we also discuss the positive impact AI can have and the ways it can be used to help us.

A Safeguarding assembly has been delivered to all year groups this term, focusing on the risks of social media and keeping yourself safe online.

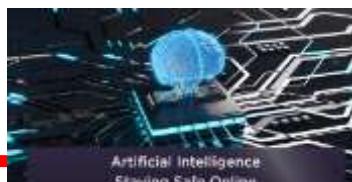
We have recently been made aware from Wiltshire Police, that a large group of children appear to have been added to a WhatsApp group chat with the title 'SKIBIDI'. In this chat, two unknown people have been sending inappropriate images. All individuals within the chat appear to be under 16 but this cannot currently be confirmed.

The majority of the pupils within the chat appear to attend local Swindon schools inclusive of The Deanery, but no further details are known and no specific children identified.

This investigation will be ongoing to try and identify individual involvement, but please can parents and carers monitor their children's social media and notify a member of the safeguarding team at school should new information emerge.

Thank you,

Miss Luckman





Year 11 Preparation for Exams:

This is a vital year for our Year 11 students, however, during the pre-public (mock) and public examination periods, your son/daughter may become increasingly stressed and anxious and this is often heightened for those with special educational needs. For tips to help beat exam stress:

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-beat-exam-stress/>

It can be difficult to know what and how to revise, one tool that can be incredibly useful to support learners is retrieval practice. This will help your son/daughter to build their memory of key information over time:

<https://nassen-prod-asset.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Retrieval%20practice%20and%20pupils%20with%20SEND%2030.08.22.pdf>

Mindfulness exercises can also support student wellbeing during this time. Please see below for strategies and tools that may be useful to help you to support your son/daughter:

<https://my.optimus-education.com/supporting-wellbeing-pupils-send>

The SEND dept is offering additional support to all year 11 students with SEND, including a 'How to cope with Year 11' intervention (including sessions on how to improve our mental health and different ways to revise). This intervention is invite-only to ensure a high staff to student ratio, however, please do email me if you would like your son/daughter to be invited.

Fiddle toys

We have introduced school-approved fiddle toys. Only these toys will be permitted. Students will be given one free and will be expected to take responsibility of their fiddle toy by ensuring the item is in school and used appropriately in lessons. Should they lose or break their fiddle toy, they will be expected to purchase another one. If you think your son/daughter needs a fiddle toy, please do email me. I will issue them one and add their name to our list.



FidGet Toy

Supporting Your Child's Mental Health – A Parent's Guide

Mental health is just as important as physical health, and as children grow, they may face emotional challenges that can affect their wellbeing. Whether it's anxiety, low mood, friendship issues, or stress, your support can make a huge difference.

Here are some practical ways you can help:

Talk and Listen

- Create a safe space for your child to share how they're feeling.
- Listen without judgment and reassure them that it's okay to feel overwhelmed sometimes.

Build Healthy Habits

- Encourage regular sleep, balanced meals, and physical activity.
- Help them develop coping strategies like journaling, breathing exercises, or creative outlets.



Stay Connected

- Keep in touch with school staff and check in on how your child is doing socially and emotionally.
- Reach out to professionals if you notice persistent changes in mood or behaviour.

Local Support Services in Swindon

Kooth

Free, safe, and anonymous online mental health support for young people aged 10–18. www.kooth.com

CAMHS Helpline: 01865 901000 (Mon–Fri 5–11pm, Weekends 9am–11pm)

Swindon & Gloucestershire Mind

Local charity offering counselling, group support, and guidance for families. www.sgmind.org.uk

YoungMinds

National charity with excellent resources for parents and carers. www.youngminds.org.uk

Clubs and interventions

As part of our period 6 day, the SEND department offers the following clubs and interventions between 3.30 – 4.30



- **Homework Support** – for both Key Stage 3 and 4 – every Tuesday and Thursday
- **EAL support** – every Weds

The above are invite-only to ensure a high staff to student ratio, however, please do email me if you would like your son/daughter to be invited.



SIAS, The SEND information, advice and support service (previously known as SENDIASS) provides information advice and support about education, health and social care for children and young people from 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and disabilities, as well as their parents and carers.

You do not need to have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan to use this service.

- It is free, you will not need to pay for the services
- It is impartial, which means they don't take sides
- They are confidential, which means no-one will be told about the things you talk about unless you give your permission

For more information, see <https://www.swindonsias.org.uk/>



Parental meetings

Please note that parental meetings will be held Tuesday and Thursday only via appointment only, unless it is an urgent matter.

Dr Caroline Kafka-Markey

Email address: kafka-markeyc@deanerycofeacademy.org.uk

Notices

Reminder: we're a **nut free school** due to serious allergies within the school community. Also, students should not be bringing and using aerosols in school as it is impacting staff and students who suffer from asthma.

Important notice: We understand that sometimes face to face meetings will be required between staff and parents/guardians. However, we respectfully request that these are pre-arranged and booked in with the relevant staff, and that parents/guardians **do not just arrive at the Academy** and expect staff to be available for a meeting. Please contact the members of staff via the academy email: admin@deanerycofeacademy.org.uk in the first instance to arrange an appointment.

Thank you for your support with this.

Absence reporting

If your child is unwell and will be absent from school, please call: **01793 236611** and leave a message, clearly stating your child's name, tutor group and reason for absence or report via ARBOR.

Dates for the diary

A copy of the term dates calendar is available on our website: <https://www.dcea.org.uk/parent-information/school-information/term-dates/>

3rd November – Term 2 begins
10th November – Knife crime awareness week
10th November – Year 11 mock exams begin
14th November – SEND drop in morning (9am – 11am)
20th and 21st November – INSET days (**school closed for students**)
27th November – Mischief Theatre trip, Bath
3rd December – Year 10 subject consultation evening
5th December – Zanzibar fundraising trip
11th November – Christmas jumper day
15th December – Christmas concert
17th December – Year 11 subject consultation evening
19th December – End of term 2

A reminder: For queries, please use the main Academy email address:

admin@deanerycofeacademy.org.uk and your email will be *forwarded* to the appropriate person.

We aim to acknowledge all emails **within 2 working days**, and to respond in full (*or arrange a meeting or phone call if appropriate*) within 5 working days.

If you feel your query requires an urgent response, please call the academy.

Our communication policy can be found here: <https://www.dcea.org.uk/important-information/policies/>