

# “Discovering and Learning Together, so all can Flourish”.

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

Wisdom - Hope - Service - Resilience

Issue 6

15<sup>th</sup> December 2023



# The Deanery Way

I am pleased to introduce our fourth newsletter of this academic year and to update you on reflections of the previous term. We began the term with a Friday Firework event, a whole week where KS3 students were treated to events as part of the Literature Festival, and then the following week we had Tutor evening, and how great it was to see the school full with visiting parents. Yr7 were also treated to a play in the theatre called The Great Christmas Robbery, where there was an abundance of laughter! I believe Mr Harmer, our Head of PE, thoroughly enjoyed his moment in the pantomime limelight!

The penultimate week of term saw Yr11 visiting Commonweal 6<sup>th</sup> Form to experience what Post-16 provision may look like for them. A further Careers workshop day is taking place in the final week of term for Yr10 and Yr11.

There was also a great deal of Christmas excitement happening! Yr7 had a trip to Christchurch, and we were also blessed with a wonderful Christmas Concert, organised by the Performing Arts department. The students that took part showed such pride and ambition for themselves and were a true credit to the school. It's always a pleasure to watch our students perform. We also had Christmas Jumper Day, alongside Christmas lunch. The Agora was simply bustling with Christmas cheer on Thursday! It was fabulous to see the multitude of Christmas jumpers out there! Finally, we had a Community Christingle after school, where we were led in prayer by Reverend Owen and joined together to sing carols. The final week of school sees Reverend Owen leading assemblies for all year groups as we send them home to enjoy a well-deserved Christmas break.

Regarding attendance, we have seen a significant improvement in reducing the amount of lateness, and our overall school attendance has improved. This term's focus was consistency. We really appreciated your help and support in ensuring your children were, and continue to be, in the appropriate uniform and follow our behaviour policy. We have seen an excellent improvement with students wearing their uniform with pride.

After the Christmas break, we will be looking to tighten up procedures for detentions and reflection. As part of this, the restorative justice practices will continue to be developed with our Assistant Heads of Year. More information will be sent out in due course to explain what this will mean for detentions and the reflection room, but we continue to ask for your support in encouraging students to attend detentions to ensure these are not upscaled.

On behalf of the curriculum team, we thank you for your ongoing support, and I hope you enjoy reading the following newsletter. We wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and we'll look forward to welcoming you all back in the New Year!



Kind Regards,

**Lisa Scotford**

*Head of English &*

*Assistant Head teacher for CPD & ECTs*

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## Follow us on X!

**Art department:** @Art\_deanery  
**DCEA:** @deaneryacademy  
**English department:** @Englishdeanery  
**Lettings:** @LettingsW  
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**PE & Sports:** @PE\_deanery  
**RE department:** @RE\_deanery  
**Science department:** @science\_deanery  
**Worship at DCEA:** @worship\_deanery



## 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.

## This term's school value: HOPE



*Advent is a time of hope and anticipation. Hope for the birth of the child who will be called "Emmanuel". Emmanuel means "God is with us". The birth of Jesus was prophesied many, many years before his actual birth. So those who had spent all that time waiting were doing so hopefully. Isaiah said: **"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace"**. That's a big claim for a little baby to live up to! I wonder how many of us feel like we **have** to live up to certain standards and expectations this Christmas time... to have the perfect tree; to have the bottom of your tree bursting with too many presents to count; to have the picture perfect setting in which everyone (including the dog) is wearing matching Christmas pyjamas. It's all lovely, but isn't it missing the point of what Christmas is all about? If you want to do these things and they're special to you then that's fine as well. But the pressure we put on ourselves (and each other) can be really quite damaging.*

*As we enter into the last few weeks of Advent and we reflect on the coming of God into the world on Christmas Day, perhaps we should look outwards into the lives of others. Jesus came to save the world. What could we do to help others and put Jesus' teachings into action?*

*Every year the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal advert on the TV gets me. I often think about all those who are out in the cold during this time and what it must be like to have to endure not only the challenges of being homeless in terrible weather but also the isolation and loneliness they must feel. Perhaps we could do more to invite people in and share whatever we have, great or small. Have a wonderful Christmas break!*

If you wish to donate to the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal, you can do so here:

[https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/support-salvation-army-christmas-3?utm\\_source=Google&utm\\_medium=PaidSearch&utm\\_campaign=IGChristmas23&utm\\_term=&utm\\_content=&gad\\_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAyeWrBhDDARIsAGP1mWQmyWlqM6nfwjHkXE3B9lm3e986wHw54S-IZNgegUXhYD0lpeVXXKXQaAoDQEALw\\_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/support-salvation-army-christmas-3?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=PaidSearch&utm_campaign=IGChristmas23&utm_term=&utm_content=&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAyeWrBhDDARIsAGP1mWQmyWlqM6nfwjHkXE3B9lm3e986wHw54S-IZNgegUXhYD0lpeVXXKXQaAoDQEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds)

**Mrs. Gallagher**

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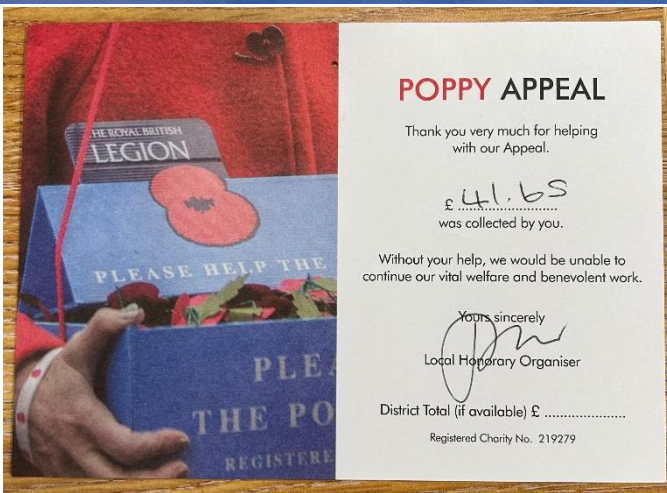


# Service

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

The PE Department presents - *The Deanery's 2023/24 Sports Captains*

Huge congratulations to the students selected to become this year's Sports Captains. They will be helping out with various sporting events including sports day, enrichment and upcoming house events as well as having an important voice in how PE runs at the school.



Thank you to those staff, students and members of the community who donated to the Poppy Appeal in November.

We raised £41.65 for the Royal British Legion.

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# Wisdom

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

If you are interested in your child learning a musical instrument in school - please contact Swindon Music Co-operative. They provide the instrumental teachers at the Deanery and lessons are booked directly with them. Details below:



**1-1 Instrumental music lessons at school, online or at home.**

*Piano, Drums, Guitar, Woodwind, Brass and Strings.*

Swindon Music Co-operative - providing 1-1 instrumental lessons in schools across Swindon and Wiltshire since 1998.



*Our aim is to develop each pupil's musical potential according to their individual needs and aspirations. Quality of teaching is monitored through regular observations of all our teachers.*

For more information or to apply please scan the QR code below

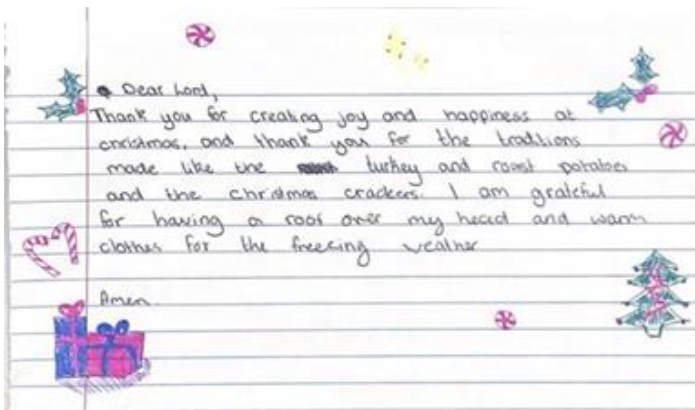


Application form



More information

Swindon Music Co-operative, Astoria House, 165/166 Victoria Road, Swindon, SN1 3BU  
01793 781973 • info@swindonmusiccoop.co.uk • swindonmusiccoop.co.uk



## **Christ Church Visit - 4th December 2023**

Year 7 spent the morning at Christ Church learning about advent and receiving a service from Reverend Simon Stevenette. Whilst at the Church the students also practiced their carols which included 'Ding Dong', 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' and 'O Little Town of Bethlehem'. Each tutor group wrote a tutor prayer which was presented in front of the year group and the Reverend.

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# Resilience

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

## Y9 Rugby Festival

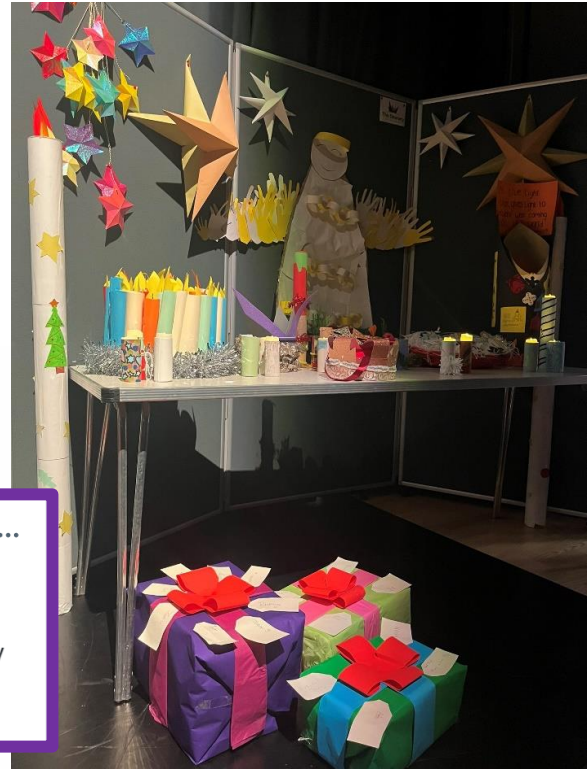
Last week the Year 9 rugby team played in the waterfall tournament, they came 5th in Swindon with some astonishing plays and some great tries. These tries were scored by Jack S, Jake B and Soshians S. The whole team did outstanding and the Man of the Match was Arlo F. They all had fun and all enjoyed it.

*Match report written by Marcelli S & Malachy M*



Emma Pickles  
@Art\_Deanery

A fantastic effort made by so many tutor groups for our Christmas celebration competition.... displayed in our Christmas assemblies today @deaneryacademy. Winners for each year group will be announced on Friday! #christmascelebrations



## GSCE Geography field trip

On Tuesday 28th November our lovely year 11 geographers went on their compulsory fieldwork to Swanage. They spent the day looking at hard engineering of the coastline and asking residents about the traffic management schemes in place to reduce traffic in the sleepy seaside town. All this links to their other topics and it was so lovely to see them enjoying themselves outside the classroom.

The Geography team, Miss Boulton and Miss Phillips, were accompanied by Mr Woodrow, Mr Ouldrige and Rev. Owen (who brought hot chocolate for the pupils, Yum!). Luckily the weather held and no one fell into the sea!

Well done year 11, you did the Deanery proud!

**Rotary**  
**YOUNG**  
**PHOTOGRAPHER**  
**COMPETITION**



We recently entered students for ***The Rotary Clubs Young Photographer competition*** and **Charlie Dearlove in year 10 has been awarded 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Senior category** of this year's Competition!

All of the entrants will be given a medal for entering the competition, as well as a certificate. In addition Charlie, having been awarded 1st place, will receive a trophy, a framed certificate and a book token. Charlie's entry will now be forwarded for inclusion in the District Competition. A huge congratulations Charlie and the best of luck, we have everything crossed for you!

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# Hope

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

## PE Team of the Term 2

Well done to the 12 students who have made the latest Team of the Term! The students selected have represented the PE department brilliantly in lessons, enrichment and in after school fixtures. Well done to all chosen, keep being amazing role models for everyone at The Deanery.



A thank you to Rev Owen Green who delivered back-to-back Christmas assemblies with all year groups this week. Unknowingly, some teachers were 'volunteered' to play an active role in the Christmas story, and did so wonderfully! Another great opportunity for large groups of our student family to come together and share in the word of God and see their teachers in a different light!

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# FACULTY FOCUS: ENGLISH

*Welcome to a new feature of our Academy newsletter: faculty focus. Each issue we will be introducing you to the various faculties within The Deanery CE Academy, and giving you an insight into all the wonderful and inspiring things our departments are getting up to.*

## **Welcome to English!**

My name is Lisa Scotford and I am the faculty lead, as well as the Assistant Head teacher for whole school Continual Professional Development and Early Career Teachers here at The Deanery. I only joined The Deanery CE Academy in April and I'm thrilled with what we have already achieved in such a little timeframe.

I have been a secondary school teacher for 15 years, training in Dorcan and Commonweal, before dedicating the whole of my 20s and early 30s to Kingsdown School. Here, I was part of the journey that supported Kingsdown moving from Requires Improvement to Good. I really relish the opportunity to be a part of school improvement and pride myself on being able to continually raise standards for students.

Educating the children of Swindon is really important to me as I'm proud to live in this community. I have a little boy, called Oliver, who is 20 months old, and a second baby on the way. Even though school years might be a long way away for them, I know the importance of securing a high quality education for them for the future. My children will one day go to school in Swindon and I want to inspire and support as many children in Swindon as possible to have an exceptional start in life. This, I truly believe, starts with education and my job is about striving hard to keep open all the doors for our students' futures.

Our English faculty at The Deanery continues to grow, and we hope to appoint more English teachers for the New Year. My department have a mixture of lengths in service, as well as specialisms, but together we are an excellent team and I'm thrilled that they've bought into my vision as leader: to inspire a love of reading; to develop proficient writers and for our students to leave us with a curiosity to continue learning.

As you will see below, English has a challenging and ambitious curriculum. We have high expectations of our students and I'm privileged to see the progress students have already made in such a short amount of time here. We have lots of plans for the remainder of the year, as well as the years to come. Watch this space!

***Mrs Lisa Scotford***

***Head of English***

***Assistant Head teacher for CPD and ECTS***



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## Meet the team...



**Miss Gina Harper – Lead Practitioner**

Hello, I'm Miss Harper! I've been a teacher for eight years working in a number of different places in a number of different settings. I am new to the Deanery this year after returning to the UK following a couple of years teaching at a British International School in Thailand. Before that I was working at a Secondary school in Manchester and for Loughborough Sport. I am also a GCSE English Language and EAL examiner in the UK. I love teaching because no two days are ever the same and being able to make a difference in students' learning is such an amazing thing to be a part of.



**Mrs Heather Penny-Larter – Teacher of English, Media and Head of Yr11**

My name is Heather Penny-Larter. I graduated from Leicester University with a degree in Politics and a double colour for hockey and cricket. I returned a couple of years later to complete my PGCE and began teaching in Hull in 1988 so this is my 35th year in teaching.

I have been a pastoral leader and an English leader over the years. I was also a senior examiner, moderator and speaking and listening assessor for AQA for over 25 years.

In 2018, I began an adventure working as Boarding Housemistress at Harrow International School, Beijing, then at Wellington International School in Shanghai and finally NAS Ningbo.

I am a keen singer, singing with Swindon Choral Society and enjoy bread baking especially as an aficionado of sourdough.

I am keen to help guide year 11 through the trials and tribulations of an exam year and hope to establish the prom tradition at The Deanery.

**Mrs Laura Connors – Teacher of English and Deputy Head teacher**

I have been teaching for 14 years and am a qualified SENCo with a postgraduate diploma in Inclusion. I am proud to be a member of such a supportive and student-centered department where learners are now encouraged to think critically, express themselves confidently, and develop a lifelong appreciation of English Literature and Language. In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family, friends, and my two dogs.

**Mrs Rachel Wright – Teacher of English**

This is my first term at The Deanery and I have enjoyed it immensely. I love talking about books, playing with words and working with young people, so I feel very blessed to be a teacher of English! My background is in Classics (Latin and Greek) so I'm super keen on etymology (where words come from) and grammar, but I also love the creativity of English.

My interests are music (singing, playing piano and harp), cycling, walking, cooking, knitting, and I'm often busy with my local church. It's a joy to be teaching in a school where Bible verses are written on so many walls!



**Mrs Beth Mills – Lead Practitioner**

I've been an English teacher for 18 years, working first at Bradon Forest, and then at Devizes School where I taught Years 7-13 teaching English Language, English Literature and Media. I'm delighted to be now working at The Deanery as a Lead Practitioner of English, seeking to embed a culture of high-quality teaching and learning into all aspects of the English curriculum and throughout the school as a whole. I am a Christian, and play an active role in my local Baptist church with my husband and children who are 13 and 8 years old respectively. I am originally from a Welsh coastal area (I am a fluent Welsh speaker and am a harpist to boot!) and my longing for the sea rarely diminishes! I feel extremely grateful to work at such a lovely school: pupils (most of the time!) are delightful, pleasant and polite; the facilities are extraordinary; staff are kind and hard-working, and a lovely culture permeates the place. I set high standards for myself and for the pupils in my care, and am dedicated to propelling students towards academic success!



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**Mr Andrew McEachron – Teacher of English and VIP**

My name is Andrew McEachron, and I'm thrilled to be a part of the Deanery community. This academic year marks my first here and I couldn't be more excited. Being part of the English team has been wonderful and I have loved teaching the fantastic texts we've studied so far; in particular, 'Once' by Morris Gleitzman and 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions about the topics we are covering in English or are in need of a new book recommendation!



**Mr Martyn Parry – Teacher of English**

Hello, I'm Martyn Parry. I've been an English teacher for 26 years and have worked in a wide range of secondary schools, both in the UK and internationally. I came to The Deanery in September and feel proud to be part of an enthusiastic and dynamic team of staff. Although I've been a teacher for a long time, I still love my job and thoroughly enjoy my daily interactions with students. In my spare time, I play guitar and ride motorcycles. I also love reading and enjoy writing.



**Also part of the team this year:**

**Mr Bramley** – Head of Yr10 and Teacher of English

**Miss Godwin** – Teacher of English and Music

# KS3

At KS3 our students enjoy an ambitious and diverse curriculum, which focuses on the core skills as outlined below.

## Core Skills:

### The Core Skills:

Contextual knowledge

To provide cultural, historical, political contextual knowledge that inform students' reading and interpretation of texts.  
To build cultural capital about world beyond our community, county and country.  
To build knowledge of genres that enhances the learning experience and transition through the key stages.  
To explore concepts around society, power, gender, conflict, social change, class

Writing

To teach the skills, writing types and literacy required for life beyond school.  
To broaden vocabulary to create a rich bank of words to describe, explain, argue, persuade.  
To give students the tools to articulate themselves in different environments and facilitate social mobility.

Prose

To enhance students' ability to empathise and sympathise.  
To learn about the timeless nature of emotion and the human condition.  
To appreciate the process of writing and writers' intentions through texts.  
To recognise the impact of social and historical context.  
To explore concepts around society, power, gender, conflict, social change, class.  
To provide the opportunity to access the literary canon, authors from other cultures and literary heritage.

Poetry

Play

Each year group has its own learning pathway, and the challenge in both texts and skills increase year upon year. Each Term has an assessment point in it, so students are assessed in English 6 times across the year.

Y9	<b>Term One</b> Context and nonfiction: Gothic genre, Victorian era Writing: gothic setting description	<b>Term Two</b> Context and nonfiction: 1930s USA Prose: OMAM, analysis of theme Writing: description of a setting	<b>Term Three</b> Context for each poem Poetry: social issues poetry, comparison Writing: creative based on poems	<b>Term Four</b> Context: 1980s Liverpool Play: Blood Brothers, mini language analysis Writing: description of people	<b>Term Five - Six</b> Context and nonfiction: Elizabethan era, Shakespeare Play: Romeo and Juliet, analysis of a theme presented throughout play Speaking and Listening presentations	<b>Throughout KS3:</b> Fortnightly vocabulary lessons Fortnightly Library lesson Weekly spelling homework DNAs recapping knowledge, checking grammar/SPAG, retesting vocabulary	
Y8	<b>Term One</b> Context and nonfiction: dystopian genre, political speeches Writing: own fictional dystopia	<b>Term Two</b> Prose: The Giver, analysis of themes Writing: argument speech to join the community	<b>Term Three</b> Play: Noughts & Crosses, analysis of a theme presented throughout play Context and nonfiction: BLM	<b>Term Four</b> Rhetoric writing	<b>Term Five</b> Prose: SMART, analysis of key themes & character		<b>Term Six</b> Context: context for each poem Poetry: Poetry from Empowering Voices anthology, analysis of unseen poem Writing: creative writing based on poems
Y7	<b>Term One</b> Writing: descriptive/narrative twisted fairy tales	<b>Term Two</b> Context and nonfiction: WW1 Prose: Once, analysis of character & theme	<b>Term Three</b> Poetry: First World War poetry Writing: life in the trenches	<b>Term Four</b> Media	<b>Term Five</b> Travel Writing		<b>Term Six</b> Context and nonfiction: Elizabethan era, Shakespeare Reading: 1x Extract Analysis; 1x Writing Task Play: A Midsummer Night's Dream

# KS4

At KS4, our students follow the **AQA** GCSE specifications for Language and Literature.

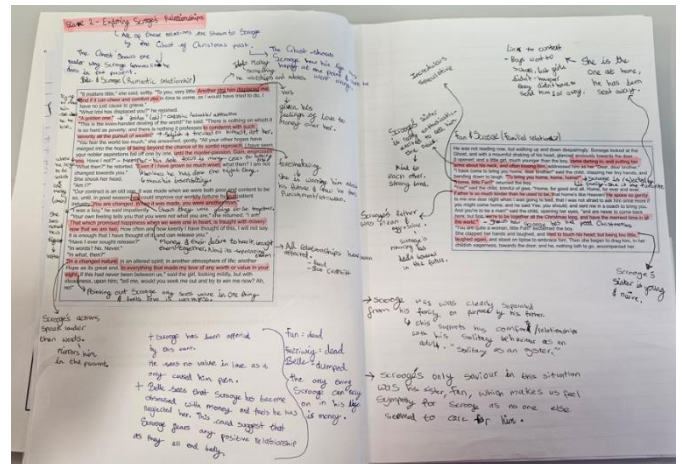
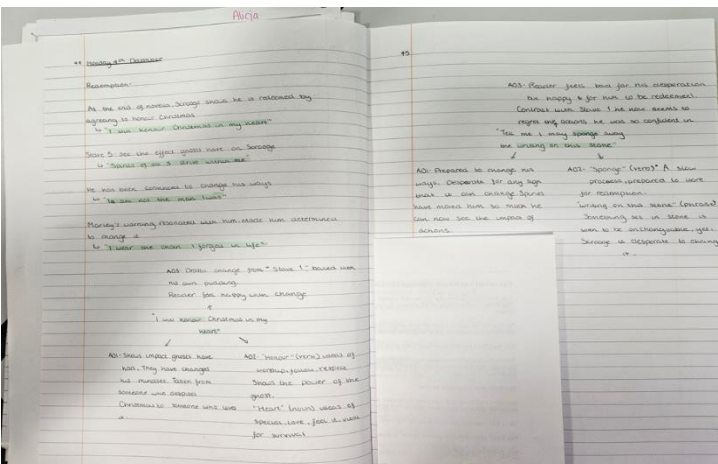
Please find below an outline of what each year group are studying, this year, below:

Y11	<b>Term One: Lit</b> Macbeth	<b>Term Two: Lang</b> Paper 1	<b>Term Three: Lit</b> Poetry: Power and Conflict Unseen poetry	<b>Term Four: Lang</b> Paper 2	DNAs @ KS4: All based upon knowledge recall Exit Tickets @ KS4: All based upon knowledge recall – remembering key quotes – quote chanting
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Y11: fortnightly Literature tests/weekly Tassomai

Y10	<b>Term One: Lit Paper 1</b> Essay Writing Macbeth Jacobean Context Critical Analysis	<b>Term Two: Lit Paper 1</b> Essay Writing A Christmas Carol Victorian and Gothic Context Critical Analysis	<b>Term Three: Lit Paper 2</b> Essay Writing An Inspector Calls Pre and Post War Context Critical Analysis	<b>Term Four: Lang Paper 1</b> Creative Writing - Writing to describe - Writing to narrate	<b>Term Five: Lang Paper 1</b> Reading for meaning from a Fiction text	<b>Term Six: Spoken Lang</b> Mocks: Lit and Lang papers Speaking and Listening Presentations
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Y10: Tassomai, Quote learning, Essay Preparation Skills



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### Revision Recommendations:

- Attending Thursday Enrichment booster sessions afterschool
- CGP books  
<https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/secondary-books/gcse/english>
- Mr Bruff and/or Mr Salles YouTube videos

### Available now on our website:

- Past GCSE Language and Literature exam papers
- Knowledge organisers for all texts
- Key Quotes from all Literature texts that we recommend students learn for their exams

# KS4 HOMEWORK: TASSOMAI

This term saw the launch of Tassomai homework for both Year 10 and Year 11 students in English. You can learn more by visiting <https://www.tassomai.com/>

## HOW DOES TASSOMAI WORK?

Students learn through quizzes and short videos, using our **mobile app** or other online devices.

**Content** is broken down into bite sized chunks and **tailored to each user**, as our intelligent algorithm works out what students know and where they need to focus their efforts.

### The Tree

#### Watch knowledge and understanding grow

The Tree is a visual representation of a learner's knowledge and understanding **based on their Tassomai usage** and the questions they've answered.

A learner's tree grows over time, and can be used to **identify topics they are strongest in**, and those that need more work.



### So far, Yr11:

- Have answered **31,050** questions
- Have spent collectively over **123hrs, 23mins** completing revision
- Have an accuracy of **84%**

The **Top 5** most accurate students were:

1. Jonah T
2. Charlotte P
3. Amelia E
4. Amelia S
5. Tomas P

### So far, Yr10:

- Have answered **35,162** questions
- Have spent collectively over **129hrs, 35mins** completing revision
- Have an accuracy of **78%**

The **Top 5** most accurate students were:

1. David K
2. Joanna M
3. Charlie W
4. Sam H
5. Ryanna J

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# Swindon Youth Festival of Literature 2023

**6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> November**

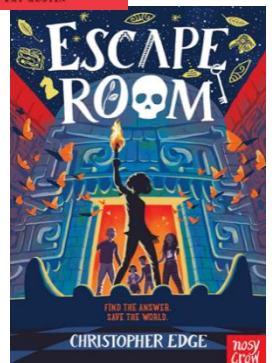
[www.swindonyfl.co.uk](http://www.swindonyfl.co.uk)

 @swindonyfl  Swindon Youth Festival of Literature

SYFL is an annual festival, run by 12 Swindon secondary schools, which aims to promote and celebrate literature in its various guises. This year, The Deanery students were treated to a wide range of events: they met and listened to various authors, 'escaped' out of a virtual Escape Room, took part in a creative writing workshop, tried their hand at poetry with a Performance Poet, competed in an inter-schools book quiz and entered writing and illustration competitions!

As you can see, we had a jam-packed programme of events!

- On Monday 6th November, we took 48 Key Stage 3 pupils to the Wyvern Theatre for an audience with **Dame Jaqueline Wilson**.
- On Tuesday 7th November, the whole of Year 7 were entertained by performance poet **Ash Dickinson** in our theatre. He dispelled myths about poetry being stuffy, and led pupils in writing their own verses!
- Wednesday 8th November saw The Times' bestselling author, **Christopher Edge**, lead years 8 and 9 in a virtual 'Escape Room'. Pupils had to solve mysterious clues to unlock 'doors'- which all cleverly linked to his recent book, 'The Escape Room'. Pupils really enjoyed this innovative session! Chris also then lead a bespoke group of Year 8 & 9 pupils in a creative writing workshop, where he inspired our pupils to write their own mysteries...
- On Thursday 9th Nov, The Deanery welcomed local primary school children to our Theatre to meet the award-winning author of 'Don't Tell Mum I Made a Mammoth!' **Kita Mitchell**.
- Friday saw Team Deanery win 2nd place out of all 12 competing!



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A huge shout out goes to our third place winner of the Creative Writing competition: Lisa

H in Yr9.

Have a read of her winning entry below:

### The Voices

I can hear the waves crashing against the jagged wall of rocks below. The air is thick with the scent of salt and the clouds ahead are a profuse blanket of grey. How did I get here? I have no clue. Why am I here? I have no clue. All I know is my head is swarming with voices. Scratchy, leering voices swimming around and around in my head. All I want is for them to be gone. I want them to leave. I *need* them to leave. I've scratched my ears and watched them bleed, I've screamed, and I've screamed but they just won't leave. I can't take this endless torment anymore. I can't take it.

I drag my tired, achy feet towards the edge of the jagged cliff and as I do so I notice the voices growing louder and louder with each step. I slowly sit down, my legs dangling over the ledge, making sure to look anywhere but down. The cold, bitter air bites at my skin and whooshes through my curly hair, howling like a lost puppy. I am dangerously close to slipping off the edge and plummeting to my death but all I can think about is the agonizing pain of the voices. Just the sound of them makes my skin crawl and my blood boil. I don't understand what they are. I don't understand where they came from. I don't understand what they are telling me. I squeeze my eyes shut and take a deep breath. I try to focus on the rough, scratchy grass beneath my sweaty palms. I try to focus on anything but me.

Ever so suddenly a cold, sickeningly cold hand grabs my ankle. I jerk back in surprise; however my foot is held firmly in place. I can hear my heart roaring in my chest, threatening to jump out my throat and down into the churning whirlpool below. Slowly, so, so slowly I move my head down. A creature stood, clinging to the cliff, one hand wrapped around my ankle, its spine bent in such a way it made me sick. Its eyes are wide and bloodshot and upon its face it bore a grin so wide it showed every sharp, pointed tooth in its fleshy mouth. I screamed. I screamed so loud I could feel it vibrating through my bones. I scrambled away, slipping a free of its grip and stumbling to my feet. I saw its long, boney hands clawing at the edge of the cliff as it emerged and stood upon the brink. I heard it. I heard its loud, screeching voice, mirroring that of the ones swarming in my head. I panicked, searching the ground to find something to defend myself with. I found nothing. Driven by pure instinct I ran forward, my hands outstretched, and pushed. I watched as the creature began to topple backwards, plummeting towards the rocks below and I watched as it grabbed my wrist and pulled me down with it.



### Judge's Comments:

*A scary clever story full of horror! I could feel the nervousness of the character as she tried to stop the voices and then the dread she faced as the creature emerged from beyond the cliff. A haunting, heart-breaking piece with real impact! Well done again for taking part!*



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## Year 11: 'How to Revise' session

On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December, Mrs Scotford and Mr Pollock ran a How to Revise session for Yr11 students.



Refreshments were available for students between school finishing and the session starting. These were well received!



### Students were taken through strategies such as:

- How to make and use revision cards effectively
- How to make revision more interesting at home (this one requires blue tack and permission to put key quotes on the inside of kitchen cupboards! Think treasure hunt!)
  - How to use knowledge organisers for revision
  - How to develop essay responses
- How to use exemplar model answers and mark schemes

Students were also supplied with a revision calendar, leading them up to the mock fortnight in January. Students left with two weeks' worth of revision planned in. Hopefully this helps our students manage their time effectively and will see them confident to tackle those exams!

All students that attended were provided with a folder of resources to take home with them, to help them with their revision.

Resources, as well as the video of the session can now be found on our school website.

If students require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Thank you, Mrs Scotford & Mr Pollock*



# The Deanery Christmas Concert

On Tuesday 5th, students from every year group took part in the Deanery Christmas Concert. Christmas jumpers and handmade decorations brought the theatre alive with colour and the varied programme - including everything from Chopin to Ariana Grande and traditional carols our singers, instrumentalists and dancers created a fun and festive atmosphere for both the audience and performers.

We began with a beautiful and poignant prelude from Luca followed by a self-penned Christmas prayer from Emily. Miss Godwin led the choir of staff and students in the Ukrainian Carol of the Bells and White Winter Hymnal. Students are relishing the opportunity to develop their vocal talents under her direction and with the support of our staff singers. Vocalise - a new enrichment for gifted singers - wished us all a merry Christmas with a confident performance of the Frank Sinatra and Judy Garland classic. The African Noel, sung by year 7's came from their Stomp and Sing curriculum this term. It has definitely boosted confidence and ability in this year group - we've been so impressed and pleased with the outcomes.

We had musicians who displayed both the enthusiasm and wonder of beginners through to our seasoned 'professionals'! A mention must go to David Kowalski and Lucas Sutton in year 10 who showed they are not only excellent in the classroom but under the spotlight too. And also to two gifted instrumentalists in year 7 - Rita and Jamie, who led and coached our new brass group through their jazzy rendition of Jingle Bells and blew us away with their improvisation skills. Our solo singers hit the high notes - Amelia, Jasmine, Sophie and Evie all worked with Miss Douglas to hone pitch, performance, song choice and Christmas pizzazz - and our dance troupes again showed the quality of work being done in enrichment. Izzy, Lily, Ruby and Alyssa could not have been more professional when technology failed them! Mr Halpin and James up in the tech box kept very cool heads too - they all held it all together, just!

We had so many fantastic moments - I haven't even mentioned the flying visit from Mr Wray in a StingWray reunion of 'Last Christmas'!

A big thank you to each and every student who took part - and to all the teachers across the school who came out to support in every way possible - including our visiting staff, Jodie Kerlake, Hannah Lee, Jim Burge, Steve York and Kate Lock who all supported the performance in some way. And to the parents who came and filled the theatre - we loved having you with us! We'll see you again soon.

**DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - High School Musical 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March '24**



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## Chaplaincy update by Rev Owen Green

Dear Deanery community,

I've been wrestling - not the cage type thing, or the American WWE variation, or the Greco-Roman, or even the 1980's World of Sport version with Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks (Google it - this is what passed for top sporting entertainment on a Saturday afternoon!) No, I'm a bit of a wimp and so my wrestling has been inside my head, or maybe my heart, I'm not sure which.

I've been in the ring with God, and specifically over Jesus' offer of bringing Peace and giving Joy. Now I'm all in for both of those, I want them, I need them, like a salve on an open wound, I know where they're needed and so I go to Jesus with my prescription to ease the condition I've self-diagnosed. I asked nicely, 'Dear Lord, please I beseech you, may I have some peace,' then I pleaded, 'God, give it to me, I'm desperate,' then I tried bribery, 'If you give me what I want I'll promise you I'll ... ' Yet the Almighty wouldn't budge, no can do!

Exhausted I quit, in truth I've been wrestling for a few months now, and I am tired. As I stopped trying to receive from God what he didn't want to give me, I felt his smile. Not his smirk, there was no pleasure in victory, kissing the guns and posing for the cameras, no this was God's heart of love rejoicing. Because now I'd stopped trying to get what I wanted, he could give me what he knew I really needed, again from his heart of love. It wasn't that God didn't want to give me Joy or Peace, it's that he wants to heal the illness at its source rather than provide a plaster to cover the wound. And so, I'm stepping into a bigger, fuller understanding of Peace and Joy. I'm learning again to trust in God's faithfulness, in his love, so rather than wrestle him for the cure to my problems, I'm simply giving them to him. It's not always that simple though, I keep wanting to take them back, and so it's a discipline, daily, hourly sometimes, to give them to God, and I reach out to take the gifts he has to give me, and it's not just Peace and Joy, no, there's a whole set, Love, Patience, Goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Self-control. As I let God have full-control, these fruits start to grow.

I believe God doesn't want just me to receive all he has to give, but all of us. All of us Joy and all of us Peace, Joy and Peace in abundance. Now, in this season of gifts it's a perfect time to receive the gifts God has prepared for us. May you know the Joy and Peace God has for you in the unique situation, circumstances and relationships in which you live.

Chaplaincy is for all of our community, for all faiths and none, for those near and those far off. I'm all about helping people to find and live in hope, especially when hope feels far off. If you would like to speak with me, you are welcome to get in touch using my email, [owen.green@dbat.org.uk](mailto:owen.green@dbat.org.uk)

I wish you all a joy and peace filled Christmas.

You may like to use this Advent prayer as we draw near to the Christmas celebration, it's taken from the 24-7 Prayer app, 'Lectio 465.'

*Owen Green*  
Trust Chaplain



Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness,  
send your Holy Spirit  
upon our preparations for Christmas.  
We who have so much to do  
seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.  
We who are anxious over many things  
look forward to your coming among us.  
We who are blessed in so many ways  
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.  
We whose hearts are heavy  
seek the joy of your presence.  
We are your people, walking in darkness,  
yet seeking the light.  
To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"  
Amen.

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### Attendance Ladder



**UPDATE:** Lateness in the morning and to lessons has significantly improved

The Deanery overall school attendance to date = **88%**

The National Average for secondary schools is **92%**

Swindon average for attendance is **91.4%**.

Our focus for 2024 is to match the Swindon average we can achieve this together by considering the following:

- Students who attend school regularly improve their chances of being academically successful
- Higher chances of good post 16 success
- Learning future skills for every day college and/ or work needed to 'show up every day on time'
- To learn social skills and resilience

**\*\*\*\*ATTENDANCE IS EVERYONES RESPONSIBILITY \*\*\*\***

We look forward to working in partnership with you all during 2024

*Fiona & Maddie*

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Welcome to the  
New Deanery edition of

# Family Focus



From October 1st, 2023, children, young people, their families, professionals and the school community can access the  
**'Be U Swindon'** service.

This comprehensive service will encompass therapeutic interventions *inc.* youth work, and social prescribing, in addition to providing a digital self-help platform and the Mental Health Teams in School (MHST) provision.

On  
**WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024**  
10am – 12noon

We have **BE U Swindon** coming in to the community room at The Deanery, to give a talk on Mental Health, and explain what services are on offer to adults and young people.

Please can you email [Tracey.Lappin@dcea.org.uk](mailto:Tracey.Lappin@dcea.org.uk) if you wish to attend BEFORE 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Please note you will **only** be able to attend, if we receive an email from you, so that we can make arrangements for access, seating and light refreshments

If you feel you would benefit from any support at home, please do email me:  
[Tracey.lappin@dcea.org.uk](mailto:Tracey.lappin@dcea.org.uk)

I can signpost to external agencies, point you in the right direction, and offer advice and guidance. I can also act as a mediator or a point of contact between home and school.



Deanery Academy @deaneryacademy · Dec 11

Thank you 🙌 to @Dominos\_UK Swindon Old Town for providing extra sweet treats today for our #YoungCarers Christmas party There wasn't much left! 🍕 @DBAT\_UK



## Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust

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Christmas can be difficult for anyone, at any point in their life.

You might be struggling this year for the first time. Or you may have found Christmas difficult in the past, and you're dreading it again this year.

You may also enjoy Christmas, but not be able to celebrate it how you'd like to. Or you might find some parts enjoyable, but other parts stressful.

### **Looking after yourself**

**Be gentle and patient with yourself.** It might help to think about what is best for your wellbeing during Christmas, and prioritise what you need.

**Remind yourself that it won't last forever.** You could set a 'start' and 'finish' time for what you count as Christmas.

**Set your boundaries.** Try to say no to things that aren't helpful for you.

**Let yourself experience your own feelings.** Even if they don't match what's going on around you, they're still valid. For example, if you don't feel like celebrating Christmas when everyone else does.

**Take time out.** Do something to forget that it's Christmas or distract yourself. For example, you could watch a film or read a book that's set in the summer. Or you could try learning a new skill.

**Let yourself have the things you need.** For example, if you need to take a break instead of doing an activity, or need a little bit of quiet time.

Further information can be found here:  
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-coping-tips/#LookingAfterYourself>



**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@dcea.org.uk in the first instance to arrange an appointment.

**Thank you for your support with this.**

## **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/>

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January** = INSET day

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January** = Term 3 begins

**15<sup>th</sup> January – 26<sup>th</sup> January** = Year 11 mock examination period

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January** = Year 9 options evening

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February** = GCSE Performing Arts evening

**Thursday Year 9 parents evening** = 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb

**Thursday Year 11 parents evening** = 29<sup>th</sup> Feb

**Thursday Year 10 parents evening** = 28<sup>th</sup> March

**Thursday Year 7 parents evening** = 18<sup>th</sup> April

**Thursday Year 8 parents evening** = 25<sup>th</sup> April

**A reminder:** For queries, please use the main Academy email address: admin@dcea.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/>

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