

DASP NEWS

**The Newsletter of the
Dorchester Area Schools Partnership**

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DASP schools re-create the playground of the past.



During the last two weeks of term, DASP First schools Year 4s staged performances in the St Osmund's Sports Hall, which brought back memories of playground of the past.

Individual schools acted out rhymes and games for an audience of parents. Clearly much practice and rehearsal had gone into getting the routines right, including some impressive skipping in a small area. The Schools would then join together to sing songs of or relating to the peoples lives in the past.



The Year 4 Choral festival was directed by Christine Page and the Accompaniment was by the 4 members of the Electric Orchestra. Liz Adams, DASP Music Co-ordinator supported Christine in the festival arrangements. Thanks to Rob Davies and St Osmunds Sports Centre for hosting the practises and the event.

The event was a huge success, greatly enjoyed by the children and their parents. A collection was taken for the Dorchester Children's Centre and an excellent amount was raised.

The Learning Challenge at Dorchester Middle School

More than 50 pupils and students from Dorchester Middle School and Thomas Hardy School are currently meeting after school to participate in the KS3 Learning Challenge.

Sixth Form students coach and mentor Year 7 and 8 pupils in personal organisation and learning skills. The pupils are really benefiting from the support and guidance their 6th Form 'buddies' are giving them. They look forward to their 1 to 1 meetings each week.

Dorchester Thomas Hardy students have not only shown a great level of commitment and responsibility, but are also superb at communicating with their pupils, building their confidence and making them feel special. The students should feel a real sense of personal achievement by seeing the positive impact they are having on our pupils.

Many thanks to Rebecca Dodman of Thomas Hardy and all the students involved.

Visit to Finland

There follows two accounts of the DASP Headteachers visit to Finland, which focussed on early years provision in their schools. First, Peter Farrington gives an overview of the visit and then Carole McCormack, on how it may specifically affect the work in her school.



A year 1 P.E. lesson emphasising co-operation, skills and healthy attitude to exercise.

A Year 2 girl with severe learning difficulties attends a P.E. Lesson of skating and skiing.



Piddle Valley First

In January I visited Finland with three colleagues from the Dorchester Area Schools Partnership. The reason for my visit was to research teaching and learning methods in the Early Years. Overall we visited 13 schools in 4 days! What I saw was delightful and quite amazing. Very young children are not expected to be work machines, absorbing vast quantities of knowledge and producing perfect writing at age 4. Rather the development of the whole child – that child's wellbeing and social

and emotional development are at the heart of everything that is done. Schools are quiet, gentle and co-operative learning communities. Testing is unknown, as is Ofsted. Everything operates within a climate of security and trust.

Visits such as this are just one of a number of initiatives that inform development of our Early Years curriculum at Piddle Valley over the next year. We are planning opportunities for talk or discussion for a range of specific purposes- to develop social co-operation, problem solving, creativity, defining ideas, and speaking to a range of audiences. At the start of the new school year in September our major focus will be incorporating this development within our Early Years Curriculum – and we are all very enthusiastic about introducing something which we believe will directly benefit our children. Other points for development are continuing to utilise our beautiful outdoor environment to the full, and finalising the creation of an outdoor classroom; extending opportunities for structured play through Year 1; concentrating on the nurturing and social aspects of sharing food, and leisure time at break and lunch together. In future, children qualifying for free school meals will have a well balanced lunch produced for them by my Midday Supervisory Staff and we will be actively seeking opportunities to share hot lunches together as a 'family' through, as always, the phenomenal efforts of my Staff to give their all to the education of our children. I am delighted that we will be offering a curriculum and a school 'experience' that is at the forefront of latest best practice.

Carole McCormack
Headteacher Piddle Valley First School

Charminster First re-enact the hospital at Scutari.



In history this term Class 4 have been learning about Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole

and their work in the Crimea. One day the adults dressed up as Florence and Mary and the children role-played soldiers in the hospital at Scutari. Some children also dressed up as Victorian children. We compared the way doctors and nurses dressed in Victorian times and in modern times.

NVQ Training for DASP Teaching Assistants

DASP is now giving its Teaching Assistants the chance to achieve an NVQ through training sessions and mentoring in schools. A recent training day held at Damers First and Dorchester Rugby Club looked at ICT in schools and dealing with behavioural issues amongst other things. The chance to share experiences in schools, not only with their 'tutors', but also with colleagues also undertaking the course has proved very valuable.



OWERMOIGNE'S SWIMMING SUCCESS

We had a very exciting time at the First Schools Swimming Gala, held at Purbeck Sports Centre. We won several races including the relays. This means we will now go forward to represent our area at the Littledown Sports Centre, Bournemouth later this term.

"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory brought to life"

The annual production was once again an overwhelming success for the children and staff of Owermoigne Church of England First School. With an original script and lyrics written by Mrs Jean Ryan and the music being composed by Jo Courtney a friend of the school, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" was brought to life, with every child in the school taking part. Class 4 were amazing

playing the lead roles with confidence and with obvious enjoyment at all three sell out performances held in Crossways and Owermoigne Village Halls. Congratulations to everyone on a truly "whole school production".



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