

In Focus

*The thoughts and opinions
of staff & pupils at Dauntsey's*



Dauntsey's

“Its friendliness, breezy campus
and outdoorsy image belie a
focussed academic purpose...
Dauntsey’s is fab.”

The Good Schools Guide



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When every school boasts about high academic standards and an excellent all-round education, choosing the right one for your children can be a challenge.

At Dauntsey's, our approach is different. As you can see, this is not a conventional prospectus but a magazine, which showcases the views and experiences of the people who make this School special – our pupils and staff.

People, not buildings or facilities, are what make a good school great and I am proud to lead an exceptional team of teachers who pass on their enthusiasm and love of their subject to pupils. But there is more to Dauntsey's – an energy, spirit, warmth and sense of community that is immediately palpable.

Of course, academic work is at the heart of what we do. We do enjoy glorious surroundings and all the facilities you'd expect. And we certainly offer an exceptional range of opportunities beyond the classroom, from sports and adventure to outstanding drama and music, clubs and academic societies.

But our ultimate priority is the happiness and fulfillment of every person in our community. In our experience, if our pupils are happy, then success will follow.

I hope this magazine gives you a sense of what it's like to be at Dauntsey's and whether your son or daughter would be happy here. If you'd like to experience the School for yourself, please visit us. You'll find open spaces and open minds.

Mark Lascelles

Mark Lascelles *Head Master*

DAUNTSEY'S FAST FACTS

Head Master: Mark Lascelles

Dauntsey's School, West Lavington, Wiltshire.
Phone +44 (0)1380 814500 www.dauntseys.org

Sat Nav for main school entrance: SN10 4HE

Location:

Northern edge of Salisbury plain in Wiltshire, 10 miles from Stonehenge

Closest town: Devizes (5 miles)
Distance from Salisbury: 20 miles
Distance from Bath: 24 miles



80

MILES FROM HEATHROW

150

ACRES

740

TEAM MATCHES PLAYED EACH YEAR

1:8

STAFF TO PUPIL RATIO

9

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PUPILS
IN AN A LEVEL CLASS

35

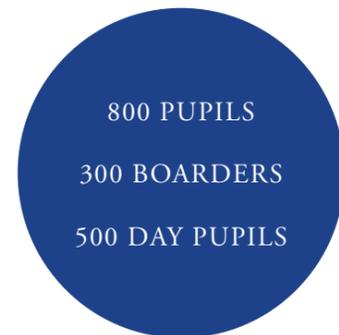
CONCERTS, RECITALS, MUSIC COMPETITIONS
OR MASTER-CLASSES EACH YEAR

80

DIFFERENT SCHOOL CLUBS
AND SOCIETIES

16

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PUPILS IN
AN I/GCSE CLASS



7

SCHOOL PRODUCTIONS EACH
YEAR (AT LEAST)

> 75%

OF LEAVERS TO TIMES TOP 15 OR RUSSELL
GROUP UNIVERSITIES

Quieter children often feel more comfortable allowing others to hog the limelight. Mark Lascelles, Head Master of Dauntsey's, argues that schools must do more to enable less outgoing children to shine.



FINDING YOUR VOICE

A sea of eager faces greets me at the first assembly of each new academic year. Behind every one lies a mix of hopes and aspirations but anxieties too. Girls and boys who have been happy and settled in their previous schools now need to find a new place and create new friendships in a new setting. It's fascinating to observe.

Children instinctively create their own social dynamic, much of it stemming from their level of self-confidence and their ability to express themselves. Within the first week of term they will start to form social groups, often based on first-impressions. As the terms pass, these social groups ebb and flow and it is vital that school plays an active role to help every child find a happy and comfortable place within the School. It is the age-old question of whether we develop as a result of nature or nurture. Are we all born with a pre-determined desire and ability to

The quieter children can feel more comfortable allowing others to go before them.

While these pupils can go unnoticed but, ironically, they may well have the most to contribute. Ideas and insights will certainly be running through their minds but without the confidence to articulate these thoughts, the pupil, and the rest of the class, loses out. On the sports field, these pupils may not be readily selected for the top teams. On the school stage they may not be picked for a leading role, even though there may

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connect and communicate with others, and an inherent confidence, or does this desire and ability develop as the result of the environments in which we find ourselves?

Certainly, we know that, as we grow, a number of factors influence the development of our personality and self-confidence; genes, gender, parental input, school and society as a whole. At school, a trend can develop where the more confident children grow in stature at the expense of the quieter ones. More confident children volunteer readily, are keen to tackle the bigger roles in school shows, to present in assemblies, to show visitors around school.

be real talent beneath the surface. In social situations, some may find themselves on the edge, needing only a little encouragement or advice to help them get involved. As the years pass, they develop coping strategies and often these pupils will form a group with others of a similar temperament. However, individually or collectively, they may have lost their voice.

If this goes unchecked, there is a real risk that these pupils will not realise their full potential. School is not just about gaining the best possible academic results. Emotional intelligence and connecting with other people are just as important. Regardless of impressive exam

grades, interviewers often make up their mind about a candidate within minutes of meeting them. And a good school will not only help the less confident pupils develop, it will also manage the drive and enthusiasm of the more confident. Unchecked, these pupils can develop the wrong attitude and dominate a classroom and their social groups. Confidence is important, but there should be no trace of arrogance.

Staff, both academic and pastoral, should work together to develop a strategy to ensure the involvement of these quieter pupils. Should they be selected to show the next visitor around or represent the school in the next competition? With the right support, they will gain a huge

amount of confidence and self-esteem, as well as profile within the class. Building their confidence in a public arena will encourage these pupils to find their voice.

Good schools ensure that every pupil gets opportunities to develop and to shine. The very best ones ensure that this happens in an environment where encouragement is the norm, where pupils recognise talent and derive as much satisfaction from the success of others as they do from their own. Staff can help by seeking out all achievements, both inside and outside school, and ensuring that these are celebrated immediately and publicly – not only at school assembly but in all available

communications channels, including the website, e-bulletins and newsletters, to ensure that achievements reach the wider school community.

Not all the answers can be found in the classroom and extra-curricular activities play a vital role. Parents can make a real difference here. By taking an interest in what your children enjoy and looking for ways to encourage them, you can help broaden their life experience and boost their confidence. There are countless clubs and societies outside school which represent interests from karate to chess. They offer children a chance to mix with people from different backgrounds and develop a wider social group. The greater the variety of social





Good schools ensure that every pupil gets the opportunity to develop and to shine.

situations to which you expose children, the stronger their social skills will be. A word of caution here – extracurricular activities are not all about winning or being the best. If you apply pressure in every aspect of a child's life, you risk switching them off completely.

All good schools offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Here at Dauntsey's, one programme with a far reaching impact on pupils is Moonrakers. All our Third Form (Year 9) take part, spending an afternoon a week on outdoor activities throughout the school year. They might be kayaking, learning self-defence or orienteering, mountain biking, cooking outdoors, crossing a river, rock climbing or dinghy sailing. Whatever activity is involved, they are developing teamwork and leadership skills while stretching themselves mentally as well as physically.

The activities themselves are only part of the picture. The pupils are deliberately put into new groups. Everyone has to work with people who are not in their normal social circle, developing new relationships, gaining an understanding of how others operate and working together to form a functioning team. Group dynamics are changed and the results can be surprising to both pupils and teachers. After a few sessions, vital life skills such as communication, co-operation, listening to others, sensitivity and tolerance of different ideas are learnt – and friends with different interests have been made.

One pupil springs to mind. Bright, but lacking in confidence within her peer group, this pupil would rarely push herself forward but, if prompted, would perform well. Given the opportunity to have a go at rock climbing through the Moonrakers programme, she was initially very nervous. Halfway up, something clicked, she knew what to do and where to

move for the next part of the ascent. By the end of the day she was helping others climb. This new-found confidence translated immediately back into the classroom, where her peers viewed her in a new light. Her more confident attitude and readiness to contribute was a delight to see.

Another pupil had made up his mind that sport in particular, and outdoor activities in general, were just not his thing. During the Moonrakers programme, it became clear that he was an excellent map reader. By the time of the overnight expedition, he had fellow classmates queuing to be in this team. They knew he would navigate the best and fastest route to camp. Success for him was not on the rugby pitch but, out in the open, with nothing but a map and compass, he really found his way. He grew an inch or two that week.

By being encouraged to move outside their comfort zone and to test personal boundaries, pupils can be amazed by what they can achieve. Working with others towards a common goal teaches them how a team operates, how to lead and how to follow. I have seen at first hand that learning outside the classroom can have a profound effect on the development of a pupil's character and entire future.

Further up the school, a Sixth Form pupil was offered a chance to join the crew of our tall ship, the *Jolie Brise*. Despite his anxieties and misgivings, he chose to challenge himself by taking part in the *Fastnet Race*. He told me that the experience showed him that he could do more than he had ever imagined. He discovered that something he had feared could be hugely rewarding. He became more sensitive to others, learnt when it's best to put your point across and when it's best to let things drop. He believes that his communication skills improved significantly

during that voyage and he now feels comfortable working in a random group of people – vital for his future career in medicine.

Every day, I tell my pupils to have a sense of adventure and try something new. Every day I see the results – both in our community and in classrooms – where boys and girls have a deeper understanding of how they function, greater self-esteem and a renewed energy and confidence in their abilities.

There is nothing wrong with having a quieter temperament, and parents should not be disappointed in a child who is not always the most vocal and eager to contribute. There is so much that they can do to encourage their children and enable them to grow in confidence. High performing pupils are easy to identify and nurture but quieter pupils often need close attention. We must all remember that the quieter pupils can have much to contribute and enrich the school – and teach to others. We – teachers and parents working together – must help them find their voice and enable them to reach their full potential.

Mark Lascelles

COMMUNITY

Warmth, laughter and lasting friendship, built on trust and mutual respect, are the hallmarks of daily life at Dauntsey's. Our 300 boarders are at the heart of our school community and are joined each morning by over 500 day pupils.



*At a time of growing pressure to succeed academically and socially, a key element of education is equipping young people to lead happy and fulfilling lives. Here, **Ann Jackson**, Deputy Head (Pastoral) explores Dauntsey's approach to developing a sense of wellbeing among our pupils.*



THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

From the moment they arrive at Dauntsey's, our pupils realise that they are part of a community: a community from which they will not only gain a lot but to which they will also make an important contribution.

This community is founded on respect, responsibility and relationships.

Respect means understanding that people have different personalities, skills and talents. Respecting others as well as yourself creates a tolerant and flexible community.

Responsibility means not only taking ownership of your own decisions and actions but also looking out for others around you. It's not about apportioning blame but admitting to your mistakes and taking time to ask if a friend or classmate is OK.

Relationships help us to understand ourselves and others better. We encourage our pupils to value the people around them and build friendships, not only within their class but also through sport, music, drama, school trips and, of course, with the staff who teach and work with them.

This explains why so many visitors, new pupils and parents talk about the special atmosphere within the School. It is not something that happens by chance, nor is it created overnight. It is something that we are very proud of and that we work very hard to maintain.

A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

At the heart of our community is the House system, which creates a feeling of belonging and collective responsibility. But the network of care and support reaches every corner of the School, from the teaching staff to the nurses and counsellors in the medical centre, from the chaplain to the domestic staff.

So a caterer might notice that someone isn't eating as well as usual, a sports master might remark that a boy is suddenly behaving with more aggression, a Housemistress might see that a normally lively girl is listless and tired, a parent might suggest that their child seems unusually stressed. We share this information, so any issues can be aired and problems dealt with before they escalate.

It helps that many families send all their children to Dauntsey's, which means that we establish extended relationships with families and create strong bonds of trust.

Parents, of course, play a crucial role. *In loco parentis* doesn't mean replacing a pupil's parents but representing them and working alongside them. The more closely we can work together, the more we know and understand our pupils and therefore the more perceptive we are when there are changes in behaviour or mood. That means we can provide early intervention and support where necessary.

Even in this atmosphere, it's important to remember that Dauntsey's, like any other school, isn't immune from what's happening in society as a whole. If anxiety and stress are issues in the wider world, it's reasonable to expect that they will be here. For example, body image increasingly affects both boys and girls, who are all under the spotlight of social media.

UNDERSTANDING THE TRENDS

The pupils are a great help: they know what the trends are within their peer group and can sometimes spot potential problems more quickly than staff.

The key is to be proactive. Throughout their time



"I've always felt I can rely on my tutor and House staff for support in academic and non-academic ways throughout my time here. I have also felt able to ask other members of staff who are not involved in my House for help too."

here, pupils can informally explore and discuss what is happening around, and to, them in a safe environment through our Complementary Curriculum and PSHE (personal, social and health education) programmes, as well as having the opportunity to hear from visiting speakers.

To build self-esteem, pupils are encouraged to make the most of the many wonderful opportunities that are laid at their feet. Sport and adventure promote resilience; drama, dance,

art and music feed creativity; trips and visits set the world of school in a broader context. Importantly, all of these activities build confidence, encourage tolerance and can promote the relationship between hard work and great results.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

But you also have to expect the unexpected, because life is always unpredictable.

It is equally important to be aware that the wealth of choice can itself become a pressure and that growing young people can take on too much.

This is about striking a balance between care and personal development. We are not trying to mould a Dauntsey's pupil – we are here to help each person to find out more about themselves, enjoy success beyond the classroom, make lasting friendships and experience inevitable failures in a safe context.

Ultimately, it is about equipping them with the tools to leave us as happy, secure young people who are ready to take their place in the world.

YOU'RE NEVER BORED AS A BOARDER

Many of Dauntsey's pupils are boarders. For some, boarding is a necessity, as their parents live far away from the School. For others who live closer, it's a matter of choice.

Boarders live in one of the five boarding houses, each one being staffed by houseparents who live on-site with their families. The boarding houses rapidly become home-from-home and fellow boarders become

extended family. As one member of Jeanne puts it, "The girls are like my sisters." Each house buzzes with a life of its own. Even though pupils can leave after Saturday school and matches (and occasionally during the week), many of them choose to stay to enjoy activities that range from fancy dress parties and quiz and film nights to barbecues, theatre trips and meals out.

Here, houseparents and boarders talk about their experiences.

ANNIE EVANS IS HOUSEMISTRESS OF JEANNE HOUSE (BOARDING HOUSE FOR 14-18 YEAR-OLD GIRLS)

Being a houseparent is a special position and it's very much a case of growing into the role emotionally. As well as making sure the girls are fulfilling their potential academically, you also provide a sympathetic ear if they have a problem. We aim to make sure that Jeanne feels like a home to come back to at the end of the school day.

We are a small community and behave like a family, with the older pupils looking out for the younger ones, especially outside the House. We nurture that spirit and the girls love getting together, whether for a shopping trip, themed meal night, a visit to the seaside or cinema.

It's amazing how open the girls are, how willing to share their lives. I very much enjoy getting to know their families and it's always a particular pleasure to welcome a younger sister. My role is incredibly varied, from baking birthday cakes to writing UCAS references, to supporting the girls, be it at a concert or play or hockey match. I also provide a great spider removal service!

My aim is to guide and support every girl so that when she walks out of the school gates, she looks back with a lot of happy memories and not too many regrets.

WITH HER FAMILY HOME IN HONG KONG, KATIE CHOI, 16, IS A BOARDER IN JEANNE

I came to Dauntsey's because my brother was here and was so enthusiastic that I really wanted to join him.

I felt at home right away. Loads of pupils helped me settle in. The first week you have activities involving the whole House, so you really get to know each other. You're not allowed to stay in your room so you have to go out and join in, which is really the best thing to do!

I love our House parties which are a lot of fun but it's the little things that really make Jeanne feel like home. The cakes and hot chocolate at the end of a day, pancakes, watching TV together and, of course, helping each other with our school work.



My Housemistress is always there but never intrusive. She respects your space and I never feel overwhelmed. If I've got a problem, I've someone to turn to and I respect that. I'm really happy here. I also want to be a good role model and support the younger girls.

ALLISTER SHEFFIELD IS HOUSEMASTER OF MERCERS' HOUSE (BOARDING HOUSE FOR 14-18 YEAR-OLD BOYS)

Being a Housemaster is a vocation – it becomes your entire life. We're here 24 hours a day and, at any time of day or night, the boys can come to us for conversation, advice or counselling.

I want them to feel safe and secure – that people are on their side. They need to know they can share anything.

Support from peers is just as important as support from staff, so each pupil has two buddies for the first year, to offer friendship and help iron out any difficulties or homesickness.

At the start of each year we have a huge range of activities so pupils can settle in. It keeps them really busy for the first few weeks and means a that pupils can get to know each other.

The boys share rooms until the Sixth Form and each year they get a different roommate, which helps them learn to adapt to other people and become tolerant and accepting. Friendships form easily across the year groups, and in many cases last well into adulthood.

Boarding used to be mainly for pupils whose families lived a long way away but we now have an increasing number of local boarders who felt

they were missing out on the social side and the out-of-hours academic support as day pupils.

Boarding is a step towards independent living in a safe and encouraging environment and it's a pleasure to see Mercers' boys take increasing responsibility for themselves and others.

SAM CLARKE, 14, HAS BEEN BOARDING SINCE HE JOINED DAUNTSEY'S IN THE THIRD FORM. RATHER THAN SPEND TWO-AND-A-HALF HOURS ON THE BUS COMMUTING EVERY DAY, HE DECIDED THAT BEING A BOARDER HAD MANY ADVANTAGES.

At first being away from home was a bit of a shock but I soon got used to it – and it's amazingly convenient. You're close to all the teachers whenever you need help with your work and you can talk to them about anything that's going on in your life.

I go to the trampolining club and take tennis and guitar lessons which are great. I enjoy the house-based activities, like going to the cinema and the inter-house competitions where you get really involved, trying to win points for your House. As a boarder you can take advantage of all the sport, activities and facilities available here, without having to make special arrangements.

You're with the same group of people pretty much 24/7, so you have to get along together because you live in a small community. I have learnt how to deal with other people's quirks and not let things irritate me. I have also made really good friends.



A CLOSER LOOK AT... THE MANOR

The Manor was built as a family home back in the 1860s. Today, some 150 years later, it still is. The difference is that there are rather more (up to 70) 11 to 14-year-olds than the original owner, Sir Edward Pleydell-Bouverie MP, anticipated. In its role as Dauntsey's Lower School boarding house, it is also considerably noisier.



“Film and popcorn night is my favourite! Along with the woods. And the games. And the trips.”

“They are free to enjoy a proper childhood for that bit longer. I’ll often find them playing outside under the floodlights in winter, making camps and, in summer, climbing trees.”

You’ll also find Manorites honing their skills on the tennis courts, navigating our seven-hole golf course or investigating wildlife, on foot or by mountain-bike, in the Manor Wood. If they are lucky, they may see a raptor hunting its prey or one of the roe deer that roam former parkland and if they want to learn more about the local flora and fauna, they can join the Wildlife Club.

“There’s always so much to do and new things to try. Some of my day pupil friends envy me quite a lot,” says Georgina, a Second Form boarder.

There are also plenty of opportunities to unwind together, with activities such as camping, ice skating, playing Laser Quest in the woods, learning to cook, regular film and popcorn nights, frequent Lower School socials, such as the Halloween disco. A highlight of the year is the annual surfing trip to Cornwall.

Each week, two girl and two boy Sixth Formers act as big sisters and brothers on Manor duty, helping with prep, organising games and instilling bedtime routines. The youngsters can talk to them and the Sixth Formers are there as friendly faces during the day at the main school.

Pupils always have a sympathetic adult to turn to, just as they do when they’re at their family home. A nurse is available, in case anyone feels ill. Pupils can even keep small pets in a dedicated outbuilding.

In fact, life at The Manor is such fun that day pupils invite themselves for weekend sleep-overs with their boarder friends. It is part of the bonding process and helps to prepare both borders and day children for life in the Upper School.

“There’s a point fairly early on when teachers and staff know that a child has settled in,” says Eleni. “It’s when they stop asking each other, ‘What time are we going back to the Manor?’ and start saying, ‘What time are we going home?’”

Many boarders join in the Third Form (Year 9), spending a year at the Manor before moving on to senior boarding houses. Others spend three years there after joining us in the First Form (Year 7).

“Boarding at The Manor makes the transition from prep or primary school to senior school a lot easier,” says Eleni Condiaris, Head of Lower School.

“They’ve experienced being the oldest in the house before moving on to become the youngest in the senior school. That means they’ve acted as role models for younger pupils and have become used to a degree of responsibility, whether that’s as head of house or being a sports or social rep.”

As a co-educational house, boys and girls study, socialise and eat together, forming friendships that often last a lifetime. The boys’ and girls’ quarters are on separate floors and this gender separation prepares them for boarding in single-sex houses on the main school site.

“As the Manor is five minutes’ walk away from the main school site and set in 65 acres of grounds and ancient woodland, the children are less affected by peer pressure from older pupils,” says Housemistress Anne Sampson.



ACADEMIC

At Dauntsey's we are proud of our academic reputation and tradition of examination success. Our academic curriculum is well-balanced, wide ranging and offers plenty of choice.



*Television, social media, electronic games, films – books have a lot of competition these days. And that's before clubs, sports and other activities come into the picture. No wonder children are reading less fiction. Here, Head of English **Andrew Brown** argues that a reading habit is crucial to our development as human beings.*



FICTION: FOOD FOR GROWING MINDS



"I can always tell when you're reading somewhere in the house," my mother used to say. "There's a special silence, a *reading silence*." So opens Francis Spufford's memoir of a childhood spent reading, *The Child That Books Built*. It seems an obvious point to make that any child who is able to find that focused and concentrated silence in books at an early age will find focus and concentration on other tasks at later stages more achievable. Study after study has shown that children who grow up with a reading habit – or even in one case, just with books in their home – are more independent, more articulate, more self-confident, more likely to base opinions on evidence, and ultimately more academically successful, than those who don't.

At secondary level, one of the requests most frequently asked of English teachers is for recommended reading. The story usually goes: "My child used to read all the time, but has stopped recently." The exact meaning of "recently" varies. Year Six is a popular stopping point for reading; starting secondary school is another; "When they got their smartphone" another still; but we are told that lots of pupils seem to have more or less stopped reading independently for pleasure by around the Third Form.

_____ *"Reading, by which we mean reading anything at all, helps to encourage a creative, imaginative and empathetic approach to the world."*

This seems extraordinary. We are living in a golden age of Young Adult (YA) fiction, with series such as *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, and *Twilight*, and authors such as Philip Pullman, Patrick Ness, Frances Hardinge, Marcus Sedgwick, Mal Peet, Gillian Flynn, Meg Rosoff and Malorie Blackman contributing to a boom in book sales for the 11-15 age group that is unprecedented. YA book sales have been rising by between five and seven per cent a year for the last few years and show no sign of falling again. This seems to cut against the stories we hear of young adults who are beginning to refuse to read.

This presents a paradox. Lots more YA books are being bought and borrowed; lots of YAs are not reading.



In the English Department at Dauntsey's, we believe that reading gives a real pleasure and helps to develop the whole person. We believe that the variety of life that can be experienced through literature can be of enormous help to young people as they discover and develop their identities. Reading, by which we mean reading anything at all, helps to encourage a creative, imaginative and empathetic approach to the world, on which we place a high value and which is in danger of being side-lined by the national drive for improved performance in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects.

So parents recognise the benefits of reading, asking for advice about how to encourage their children to read more. There is a wealth of novels out there for every age group, which are flying off the shelves. Academics and educators agree that the benefits of regular, private, independent reading are manifold. The government's education standards research team summarised these in 2012: independent reading improves "reading attainment and writing ability; text comprehension and grammar; breadth of vocabulary; positive reading attitudes; greater self-confidence as a reader; pleasure in reading in later life; general knowledge; a better understanding of other

_____ *'Through reading I can experience emotions that I don't experience in everyday life.'*

Second Form pupil

cultures; community participation; and a greater insight into human nature and decision-making."

But still teenagers are resistant to the idea that they might read more.

All is not lost.

It is important to note that that empathetic engagement with the world we so value can be developed to an extent by reading a thoughtful report on the latest British Lions game, an editorial about the voting age, or a review of a film. It doesn't have to be Dickens to be good for you. Teenagers' reading habits will change as they discover their own enthusiasms and passions, and develop their own adult reading habits. There may be more reading going on than we notice.

This is not to say that parents' perceptions of their children's reading habits is wrong. Most secondary school children will read less often than most primary school age children and probably less often than most adults. Competition from friends, phones and other pastimes becomes much more intense as the teenage years approach, as it should. What seems to be important is that parents, teachers and librarians do everything that they can to keep the reading flame alive during those years.

Teenagers who see books valued in their houses, who are given opportunities to choose their own material to read, who keep a book by their bed for even ten minutes' reading a night, who spend time with a newspaper every now and again, or with a magazine such as *The Week*, will be classed as readers, and will hence be getting all of the benefits listed above, not least recognising the benefits of Mrs Spufford's "special silence".

As for what to read, the answer that I always give is, "Anything." It's the habit that is most important.

History is not a series of dates, monarchs and wars, although these are among the milestones that signpost its progress. Rather, it sets the context for who we are today, how we see ourselves and the shape of our world. **Ben Sandell**, Head of History, explains how his department brings the past to life.



A SENSE OF HISTORY

This is such a catchy quotation that its origins are hotly disputed (by historians and others) and it has been picked up and re-purposed by luminaries ranging from Edmund Burke to Winston Churchill.

Fortunately, it is not a curse that is likely to afflict anyone who studies history at Dauntsey's. Whether they are exploring revolutionary Paris, talking to a man who has "caught the Black Death" or sharing the insights of some of the top brains in their fields, we make sure that history is never a dusty relic but a force that has shaped our thinking and our world.



"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

History grounds us, shedding light on the individuals and events who made us what we are today and showing us how we arrived at this point. That enables us to see the way ahead more clearly – as nations, as individuals and as political beings.

What is history?

For growing minds, which might otherwise accept the current situation as the way things have always been, it also helps to demystify the ideologies of the 21st century, such as political theories, the role of women and attitudes to slavery.

It highlights human frailty, showing that we have always made mistakes and sometimes got it right.

Take sexism, for example. By today's standards, the Victorians certainly were sexists. In the context of their time and their culture, their views were conventional and reasonable – they were conforming to the rules. It brings up the difficult question of when an event, trend or ideology becomes history.

Having pupils from different countries is another opportunity to investigate different perspectives. We might be able to hear firsthand the American perspective on the Vietnam War, for instance, then compare it with the view from China or Russia, all of which are very different.

Learning how to think

On a practical level, pupils learn to assess evidence and build cogent arguments. There are no right or wrong answers when they form a view and we will play devil's advocate to get them thinking around a topic and a set of circumstances.

We teach them to question every assumption and every argument in order to test their ideas – every answer needs to have been refined and to show why other options have been rejected. The process goes beyond mere assertion and it is far more than remembering a list of dates and facts or enjoying the colourful characters they encounter.

It is about teaching them how to think.



THE CITY OF WAR

The First World War has been on everyone's mind, with many centenaries marked over the last few years – and this is especially true for the historians who join our annual Fifth Form trip to the Western Front.

"The memorials and cemeteries made a huge impression on everyone. Endless names, so many lives lost and, in some places, the British, French and German cemeteries next to each other – all just people at the end of the day, all with families and friends, all gone. A lot of us cried – it just brought home the human side, the human cost. It was a huge sacrifice."

"We spent an emotional hour at Talbot House in Poperinge where so many had come before passing up the road to the front line. Mr Sandell gave a very passable impression of the Chaplain and we sang rather tunelessly but emotionally in an environment redolent with history." Fifth Form pupil.

"The visiting speakers broaden our knowledge and get us thinking well beyond what we need to cover for A levels. It's a privilege to hear from leading minds – it makes you want to read more widely and get more involved."

Sixth Form pupil

VISITING SPEAKERS

Over the past few years, we have welcomed many historians to the Department, including Dr David Starkey, Dr Lucy Wooding, Dr Steven Gunn and Dr Susannah Lipscomb on the Tudors, Dr Matt Rendle and Prof Simon Dixon on Russia and Prof Michael Broers, Prof James Clark, Prof Bill Doyle and Prof Alan Forrest on The French Revolution and Napoleon.

We are joined each year by Auschwitz and Belsen survivor Freddie Knoller BEM, 96, and welcome historical re-enactors to bring events such as the Black Death or the slave trade alive for our younger pupils. Annual trips to medieval castles, monasteries, the former Western Front and Revolutionary Paris complete the bill.



Ben Sandell with Belsen survivor Freddie Knoller

INFECTIOUS ENTHUSIASM

Our First Form are unlikely to forget their encounter with a man suffering from the Black Death.

We held an enrichment day which included dressing up, using props and, after the event, a project tracing how the disease spread, not only through England but across the world.

"It really makes it stick in your mind. You realise how people suffered, how it changed their world, how terrifying it must have been to be faced with a disease that seemed unstoppable," says First Form pupil Wilf.

Dauntsey's Head of Maths, **Pete Mobbs**, talks about the challenges – and opportunities – of teaching today's maths curriculum.



A CLOSER LOOK AT MATHS

Parents frequently comment that they struggle to make sense of their children's maths homework – "it wasn't like that in our day" they say. Well, no, it wasn't. Teaching – and learning – maths has changed a good deal in recent years. Today's curriculum has a sharp focus on problem-solving rather than just learning individual mathematical methods. The goal is to encourage pupils to think for themselves and become more resilient in their learning. Not only does this improve their maths, it also has knock-on effects in other subjects and as a general life skill. You need maths to make sense of the modern world, from finding the best mortgage, tracking investments, to understanding what's going on in the economy.



In the classroom, and in further education, many subjects depend on your mathematical ability – sciences, geography, economics, and design and technology are just a few examples. Maths is a core subject that every pupil takes at GCSE level and even those who do not have a natural aptitude can obtain decent marks if they can build some confidence through practice and engaging their brains in the correct way.

The teaching of maths has been transformed in response to this new, problem-solving agenda. We use logic problems, puzzles, investigations

and real-life situations that pupils can relate to, which helps make the subject more relevant and stimulating. Pupils are encouraged to break the problem down into small steps and select the most appropriate approach. If that does not work, they are prompted to think again, consult their friends or ask their teacher for a hint, check their books or use the internet for research.

It is an active process, something an entire class can tackle together. Technology, as you would expect, has an important role to play in bringing the subject alive, with the use of interactive

Mathematics is a creative and highly interconnected discipline that has been developed over centuries, providing the solution to some of history's most intriguing problems. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment.

A high-quality mathematics education therefore provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject.

National Curriculum of England. Mathematics Programme of Study 2014.

white boards, tablet computers, apps and games. There are some excellent online learning systems to which schools can subscribe and there are also maths competitions and enrichment events to open young minds to the potential of this subject. Gone are the days – thankfully – of learning by systematically copying down one method after another, without really understanding why the method worked.

Much of learning maths today is about having the confidence to experiment, to put your ideas out there and to keep on trying. It's important to

have a classroom environment where it's OK not to get everything right first time, where everyone learns from each other's experiences. Maths demands independent thought, rigorous analytical skills, resilience, a willingness to question and push the boundaries of our understanding. It goes without saying that these skills are more important than ever in our technological, data-driven world.

Each year, we run our *Dodecahedron Competition*. Now in its 30th year, this maths competition is

designed to give the most able mathematicians aged 12 and under the opportunity to stretch and challenge themselves beyond their normal maths curriculum. Below you will find two questions included in recent *Dodec* competitions which, I hope, illustrate the kind of problems we are working with pupils to solve.

Have a go yourself - if you have any problems, see if your son or daughter can give you a helping hand!



1. Uncle Trapezium was driving back from Scotland, hoping he'd be back in time to collect Bertie, who was coming to stay for the weekend. The milometer on his car read 15951 miles. He noticed that this number was palindromic: it reads the same backwards as forwards. "Curious," he said to himself, "It will be a long time before that happens again." But two hours later, the milometer showed a new palindromic number. How fast did the car travel on average in those two hours?

2. Four explorers in the jungle have to cross a rope bridge at midnight. Unfortunately, the bridge is only strong enough to support two people at a time. Also, because it is dark, the explorers require a lantern to guide them, otherwise they may lose their footing and fall into the ravine below. However, between them they only have one lantern. Young Thomas can cross the bridge in five minutes, his sister Sarah can cross the bridge in seven minutes, and their father Charles can cross in 11 minutes, but old Colonel Chumpkins can only hobble across in 20 minutes.

How quickly is it possible for all four explorers to reach the other side?

*When you can type any question into a search engine and get thousands of links within seconds, the ability to think through a problem and come up with your own solution is becoming a rare and valuable skill. This is why studying science is vital to the Google Generation, according to Head of Science **Andrew Crossley**.*



A CLOSER LOOK AT SCIENCE

Science is exciting," he says. "It's about being inquisitive and developing thinking skills rather than just learning hard facts.

"If we are only here to deliver facts, then we have been superseded by Google.

Our job is to encourage pupils to observe and question the world around them.

"We start with an observation or hypothesis and ask them to link facts and information from their practical work together to form their own conclusions.

"We are developing creative thinkers."

Theory has its place, particularly at A level, but the science department firmly believes that the route to independent thinking lies in practical work. This is an approach backed by recent reports pointing to the importance of practical tasks both in gaining an understanding of concepts and in furthering development of the skills needed in the real world.

"Practical work brings science to life, particularly open-ended, investigative practical work that the pupils plan and develop themselves, rather than simply following a worksheet," Andrew says.

"Science isn't dry – it's exciting when you begin to understand how the world around you works."

Zeb, Second Form

"Lower School pupils do a practical in almost every lesson and the Upper School probably has a practical every other lesson. It's key to developing those thinking skills, observing, trying to work out what's going on and modelling ideas. We find it invaluable."

To stimulate students' interest further, the department shares the latest news via *Science in the News* boards and invites speakers such as university professors and healthcare professionals, who provide insights into subjects ranging from astrophysics to the skills needed for a medical, veterinary or dental degree.

The approach clearly works. While some schools can struggle to engage girls, in particular, to study sciences, take-up at Dauntsey's is strong across the board.

At GCSE, boys and girls perform evenly with more than 85 per cent achieving top grades (A/A*).

Up to 60 per cent of pupils take at least one science at A level and around 30 per cent take

multiple courses. There is little in the way of gender imbalance.

Consistently over recent years, more than a third of our Sixth Form students have gone on to study Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths (STEM subjects) at university, many of them in the Russell group or the *Times Top 15 Universities*.

"We are dealing with able pupils to start with," Andrew explains. "And we have well-qualified subject-specialists who are excellent at relaying their excitement and enthusiasm to the pupils.

"The strategies and techniques we employ, as well as the emphasis on thinking skills and independent learning, really make a difference."

"Practicals provide vital lesson enrichment and give us the opportunity to investigate and put knowledge into action."

Emily, Sixth Form



In the internet age, the world speaks English, which may explain why the number of students taking foreign languages at A level and beyond is on the slide nationally – but Dauntsey's is bucking the trend. Many pupils continue with a language at A level, others dip in to a new language through clubs and societies and a growing number are choosing to combine a language with another subject at university.

WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE

Languages are more than an academic subject. They are the doorway to other cultures and societies, an insight into different thought patterns and approaches and, above all, a lifelong skill that enables all linguists to communicate more effectively, whatever language they are speaking at the time.

This is the context in which both modern and ancient languages are set at Dauntsey's. Of course, pupils need to understand the building blocks of each language but here, lessons are more likely to involve a lively debate on a topical issue than poring over grammar. Weekly chats with native speaking language assistants give older pupils, from the Fifth Form up, a chance to practise what they have learned.

Our fresh approach begins in the First Form, where children are introduced to a selection of foreign languages. Half are introduced to French and Latin for six months, while the other half learn German and Spanish. At February half term, they swap, so they get a taste of four languages.

Head of German Tory Wilks believes this is one of the reasons that languages are thriving here.

"Very few pupils have any previous exposure to German and if they preselected the languages they wanted to learn, German would have died a death," she explains.

"Instead, they pick the languages they feel comfortable with. They have ownership of the decision."

Dauntsey's also marks itself out by offering a wide range of modern and ancient languages at all levels. Pupils continue with two, sometimes three languages in the Second and Third Forms and to GCSE. In the Fourth Form, they can add GCSE Greek, Mandarin and Arabic, which are studied off-timetable. French, German, Spanish, Greek and Latin are currently offered at A level.

Even if a pupil does not continue with a language at A level, the clubs and societies offer the chance to learn something new, such as beginners' Italian, Mandarin or Arabic, while committed linguists can add to their range of languages in their spare time. Universities are often impressed by this choice.

"It's a mark of the academic calibre of the school that we offer Greek, for example," says Ayesha Hanking-Evans, Head of Classics.

"The pupils recognise and appreciate what Classics has to offer, in terms of their education and cultural understanding."

Both staff and pupils are passionate about their subjects – which is what Penny Harrison, Head of French, believes is at the heart of languages at Dauntsey's.



"When you go to another country, the most important thing is being able to communicate. The opportunity of working and living abroad in the future really appeals to me."

Sixth Form linguist

"The staff's enthusiasm and love for the language they teach come across, while the pupils' faces light up when they come to a languages class – they love it," she says. "The careers and management teams understand that languages are an important skill. And we have great trips!"

The school runs language-based trips for pupils of all ages, from an outing to Fishbourne for Lower School classicists studying King Cogidubnus and the Romans to exchange visits. In the last year alone, language students have visited Berlin, Granada, the Rhineland, Rome and Toulouse, giving them the chance to immerse themselves in different cultures, practise for their oral exams – and eat lots of ice cream.

All the heads agree that, as well as enjoying these opportunities, pupils are becoming more aware of the long-term benefits of studying a language.

"They know a language is well-regarded by universities and that it is something they can always pick up in the future or continue with up to A level and beyond," says Demelza Hills, Head of Spanish.

"There's also a realisation that languages are a skill for life, not just a qualification or an acquired chunk of knowledge. It's about making yourself stand out for universities and employers – and being able to understand and share your ideas with people from very different places."



WHY LEARN...

CLASSICS

"The grammatical detail of Latin and Greek make them challenging and rewarding. Students develop more rigour in their thinking, and the linguistic and analytical skills they gain are valuable in every subject. The study of the culture and history also give depth to students' understanding of the world we live in today." **Ayesha Hanking-Evans**

SPANISH

"Spanish is the third most-spoken language in the world, spoken by 450 million people in 26 countries – and that doesn't include the 50 million people in the USA whose first language is Spanish. If our English-speaking pupils learn Spanish, they have two of the world's top three languages." **Demelza Hills**

FRENCH

"French is the official language of the United Nations and the international language of cooking and fashion. It leads to an appreciation of the beautiful literature and culture of the country – and it's really fun." **Penny Harrison**

GERMAN

"Academically stretching, German gives you an understanding of how language works – you learn how to construct an effective sentence, write with clarity and present an argument. Many of our pupils find themselves able to discuss topics that their peers would find hard even in English." **Tory Wilks**

*Design and Technology (DT) has come a long, long way from traditional woodwork and metalwork lessons. And it's not simply a matter of technology, argues **Alun Pickford**, Head of DT – it prepares pupils for life after school.*



OUT OF THE WOODWORK

DT

has become an exciting subject over recent years, due in no small part to the significant use of modern technology. Computer aided design (CAD) allows students to develop 3D images on a screen, manipulate and then manufacture them using modern manufacturing processes such as computer-controlled milling, routing, laser cutting and, increasingly, 3D printing.

Design innovation is often in the news and people like Apple's Jonathan Ive are global stars. It makes DT attractive to the students and can be an interesting career path. There are also many broad ranging skills taught through the design process of problem solving, planning, development, organisation, communication and presentation – all skills needed for everyday life and work. It encourages independent thinking and students are asked to challenge mediocrity and think outside the box.

Students must check what's already on the market, analyse prices, rationalise quality and

reviews and use customer feedback to reach considered conclusions – which ultimately lead to better outcomes. To me, these skills are so valuable when it comes to getting a university place or starting a career. Our students tend to do very well at interview – they can discuss their own project, other products and technological innovations with confidence. As consumers, we feel they will be better informed about making the right and appropriate decisions on a product being well designed, appropriately priced and efficient.

We have a mix of students taking DT at A level – those who do it as their top choice because they want to pursue a career in a creative subject, but also those who choose it because they enjoy it and are unsure what career path they are going to take. An increasing number go on to take a design-based course beyond A level.

In recent years we have seen a number of students moving on to study Product Design, Product Design Engineering, or other similar courses. Loughborough, Brunel and Bournemouth are among the favourite destinations and the feedback has been positive about the experiences they have had or are currently undergoing.

We usually have four GCSE sets comprising around 45 students, and between 12 and 20

students studying A level Product Design. The subject is currently undergoing change and a more iterative approach to design is being encouraged. This is more reflective of how design works in the real world with the expectations of development modelling and sketching becoming much more substantial than it has been in previous years.

Students seem to enjoy coming to the Design Technology department – I think they see it as a bit of a haven from the classroom environment of most other subjects. They'll come at lunchtime, during prep, or even in the evenings and at the weekends during the busiest times. They come in for one-to-one tutorials, to work out a problem, and to get feedback or advice. These sessions are paramount to their success and help drive the projects forward. We challenge the students to keep looking at their work in order to find ways to improve it and as a result, the practical outcomes can be quite outstanding. Invariably, the work is extremely varied and usually reflects the interests of the students.



YOUNG INVENTORS MAKING THEIR MARK



KIRSTY ROBERTSON, 18, U6

Kirsty has always been sporty but when she started swimming competitively, she found the height of the diving blocks to be really daunting. Ten years on, her A level Design and Technology project was dedicated to overcoming that obstacle.

"I thought, why not make an adjustable block that would be suitable for anyone of any age?" she says. "It had to be really user-friendly and, obviously, totally safe, but it's what I would have liked when I was starting in the sport and I'm sure it will give younger swimmers the self-confidence to make real progress."

After the design stage was approved, making took around eight weeks, punctuated by sports training and matches – Kirsty not only swims but also plays tennis, hockey and netball.

"It's easier to fit in because I love practical work and the department is really close and supportive. Teachers and other pupils get on really well and are always there to help when you think you're never going to succeed."

The starting block has a powder-coated steel framework made of four parts, topped by a fibreglass platform and safety grip. Kirsty organised extensive testing, both by the children of staff and by a local swimming club, which meets at Dauntsey's, as well as pupils nearer her own age. All the eight-to-17-year-olds who tried it found it simple to use. Crucially, the younger ones found it less daunting than standard-sized blocks.

"I'd like to take it forward commercially because there's a real need for it," says Kirsty, who is taking a gap year to decide whether to move into product design or marketing. "If it were made on a commercial scale, it could be really affordable."



WILL EVERETT, 18, U6

Will's project had a simple inspiration – he wanted to save other rookie kayakers from getting quite as wet as he and his friends did when they began training for the annual Devizes to Westminster (DW) marathon.

"All of the Dauntsey's team who hadn't kayaked before spent several weeks trying to get used to the lack of stability, which meant spending rather a lot of time in the water," he explains.

"So I decided to make a simulator that would enable people to learn the basics on dry land."

Based on a mild steel framework, the machine wobbles from side to side and has a resistance unit that gives the feel of a paddle in water. The footrest and other parts are adjustable, so it can be used by people of all sizes and ages. Will got the fellow members of 2016's Dauntsey's DW team and the School's canoeing club to test it for him.

"They gave the wobbliness a big vote of approval, although there are a few problems with the paddling unit, which needs to be more sophisticated," Will admits.

Still, he's attracted attention from a company that makes training aids for kayakers and had been looking for a solution to the problem of acclimatising to the movement of the boat on water.

"Doing Design and Technology has been a terrific experience. I chose it because I want to read engineering at university and I thought the creativity and practicality would sit well with my other subjects of maths and physics," Will adds.

"I'd originally planned to become a civil engineer but this A level has opened my mind to the possibilities of product design engineering."



TOM MUTTON, 18, U6

The need to research and market an invention was what attracted Tom to Design and Technology – although he had no problem coming up with ideas for a project. As a member of Dauntsey's 1st XV rugby team, he had always wanted a way of practising throwing into a line-out that didn't demand the presence of half a dozen strong young men to lift up a player to make the catch.

"I created a metal framework with a target to aim for. You only need one other person to operate it, so you can easily get in a good practise session," he explains.

Making it was his biggest challenge, as his only previous experience was taking DT for GCSE. "But everyone in the department was so supportive," he says.

"If someone else had already used a machine or a computer program or solved a similar problem to one I was facing, then they'd explain and help out. The technician is brilliant and we all worked together so well that it was fun."

This was just as well as, Tom warns, "It's important not to underestimate how much time it takes out of your day. You have to sacrifice breaks and time after lessons to get everything done – but it's worth it."

If the training device is relevant to his passion for rugby, which he'll be pursuing during a gap year as a coach in Australia, the process of researching and scoping out the marketing plan should stand Tom in good stead when he applies for university.

"I want to study marketing, so I'll have a track record that shows I'm serious," he says.

Set apart from the main school building is an old Victorian village school. It houses Dauntsey's thriving Art Department and is a hive of creativity.

INSPIRING CREATIVITY

Drawing and painting are joined by sculpture, graphic design, photography, print-making, textiles, typography and film. Exhibitions and history of art lectures stimulate curiosity and give a wider context.

This is the Art Department – or, as Sixth Form leavers put it, "This is an Art School, as good as many in further education. It's been like an extended home, which we have had the absolute pleasure of being a fleeting part of for our time at Dauntsey's. It's a place open to exploring ideas and encourages you to break down barriers."

Continued overleaf...

INSPIRING CREATIVITY

continued...



"It's an encouraging, supportive environment, which is truly inspiring."

Yasemin should know. She has been offered a place to read Graphic Design on the BA (Hons) course at Kingston University – the art equivalent of an offer at a prestigious Russell Group university. And she is not the only one. Recently, other students have gained places at the Ruskin School of Fine Art in Oxford, Goldsmith's at the University of London, Central Saint Martins, The Bartlett UCL, The Royal School of Drawing, Manchester Metropolitan University and the elite Charles Cecil Studios in Florence.

"We offer students a sense of adventure, excitement and discovery," says Head of Art Victoria Rose. "The Art School is a place where they can take risks and not worry if they get it wrong. We aim to build creative confidence, so we can develop innovative, risk-taking,

ambitious visual communicators who stand out from the crowd.

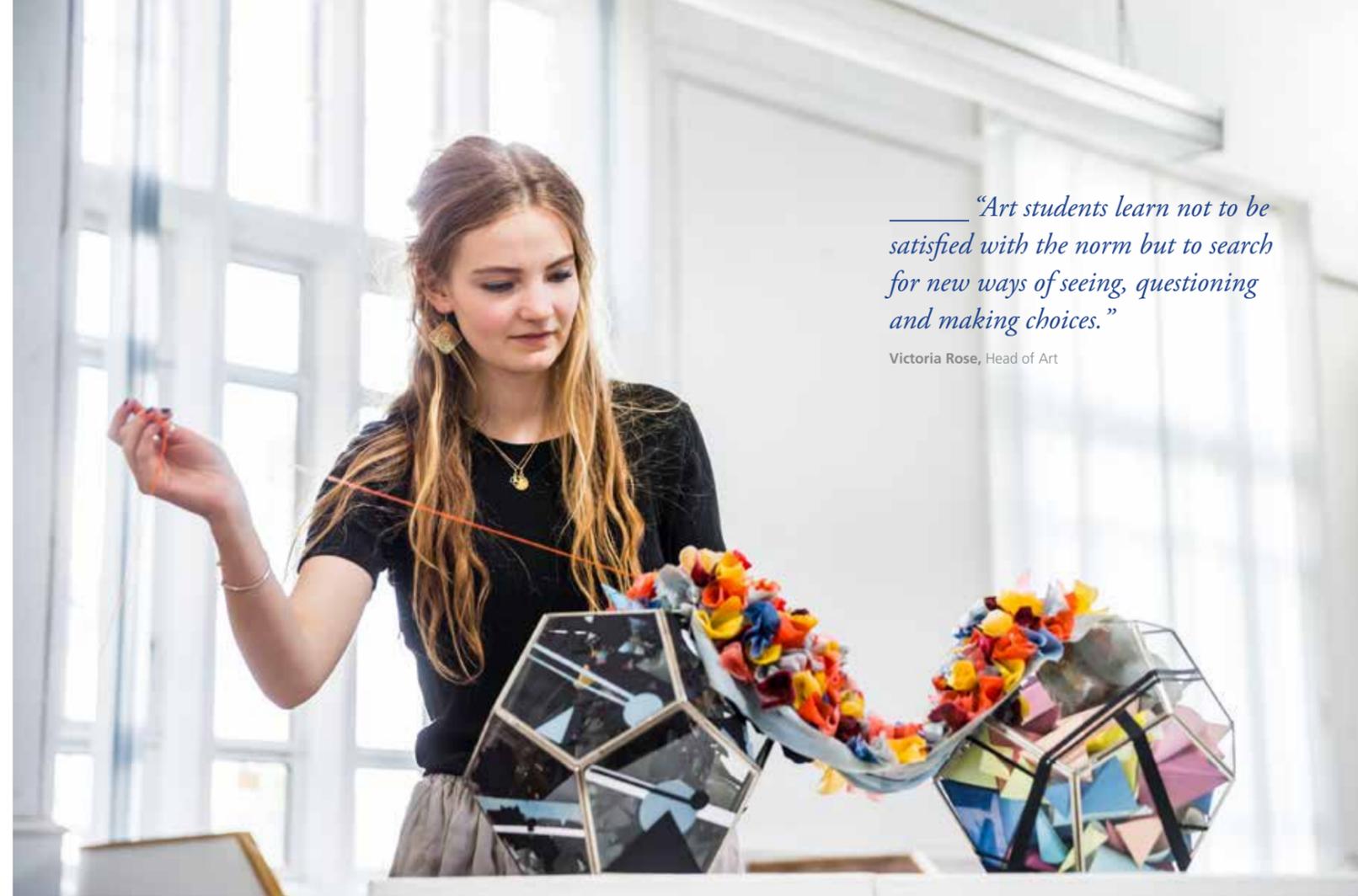
"Everything students learn is relevant to other aspects of their lives: to have an enquiring mind, to be questioning, to search for new ways of seeing and understanding – these are all invaluable life skills."

Victoria and her colleagues embrace the Bauhaus ethos, which gives equal status to all artistic disciplines. Students are taught by a range of specialists and the breadth of knowledge among the teaching team is core to each success.

Grace, who is an Upper Sixth student and has won a place at the elite Charles Cecil Studios in Florence, appreciates this approach. She states, "The Art Department is a place of unlimited creative freedom, where designers work alongside makers and painters. A ten-foot circle frame or six-foot by six-foot

"Art has stretched me intellectually more than any other subject. I nearly didn't take it but am so pleased I did."

Jim, Fifth Form



"Art students learn not to be satisfied with the norm but to search for new ways of seeing, questioning and making choices."

Victoria Rose, Head of Art

canvas is nothing that can't be tackled in our A2 exam."

Observational drawing is, however, at the forefront of teaching, since it underpins all art and design disciplines. The department is very proud of the standard of figurative work in particular.

In the Lower School, the emphasis is on mastering technical skills, exploring materials, techniques and processes. Upper School teaching promotes conceptual thinking and independent study, encouraging both traditional and contemporary art forms, from oil painting to dance performance pieces.

History of art, which was recently introduced as a separate A level, is woven into all teaching, with individual pupils pointed at material that will help to expand their ideas and provide context. There is also a series of lectures and

trips, ranging from full year visits to London galleries and trips abroad to destinations such as Florence and Venice.

Another important factor is Victoria's own background. She has had a range of roles, from art director in advertising to a freelance illustrator, designer and artist, as well as the experience of running her own business.

She uses all this to help pupils discover their artistic talents and understand how they are relevant to specific careers.

"It means that I can discuss the different career avenues open to them and give them a breadth of understanding of how their skills and abilities will be relevant to the world beyond education," she says.

"Some people are makers and some are thinkers. Understanding these creative nuances

and their value and place in industry helps us to point them in the right direction.

"It is crucial that a student, when considering a career, thinks about their broader study and combines art with the relevant disciplines. For example, maths and art are fundamental to a future in architecture."

With Yasemin set on Graphic Design, Grace aiming to become a renowned painter in Florence, and Harriet and Imogen planning careers in the fashion industry, this approach clearly works.

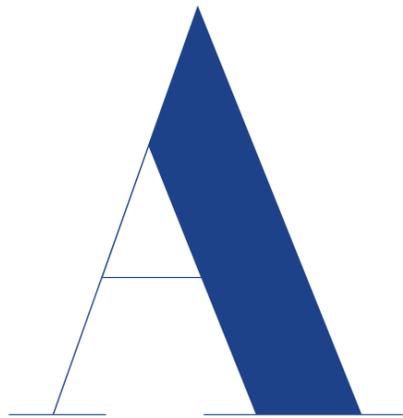
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

We believe that learning outside the classroom can have a profound effect on our pupils' self-confidence, their ability to think around a problem and their willingness to persist when things aren't straightforward.



*If the television schedules are anything to go by, making music, and singing in particular, is more popular than ever – but it's not the case in many schools, with the number of pupils who learn an instrument suffering a dramatic decline in recent years. Happily, Dauntsey's is bucking the trend – and the benefits can be surprising, as Director of Music **Gareth Harris** explains.*

A CLOSER LOOK AT MUSIC



Anyone who has sung in a choir or played in an ensemble knows the sheer joy that music can bring. Now research is quantifying a raft of other benefits of exposure to music from an early age.

Both listening to music and playing an instrument stimulate the brain, improve concentration and help to develop listening and social skills. Singing, in particular, improves breathing and mood, which is invaluable when faced with the stresses of academic work.

Musicians can even develop bigger brains. Studies have shown improvements of up to 20 per cent in English and maths results among children who learn an instrument, while people with a musical ear often pick up languages more easily.

But music has a role to play beyond the classroom. It crosses all borders, languages and cultures, develops teamwork and builds a sense of community.

At Dauntsey's, these benefits are clear – as is the enthusiasm for music in all its forms. From the Lower School, where music is part of the timetable, to old Dauntseians and parents who join our community choir and sing alongside pupils in major pieces, it is a favourite pleasure.

An impressive 40 per cent of our pupils learn an instrument, making us one of the rare schools where the majority performing in any group, band or orchestra are pupils, rather than imported adults. We do, however, bring in top professionals, such as Dame Evelyn Glennie, for workshops, recitals and inspiration.

Piano and violin are enjoying a resurgence, along with guitar and saxophone. Two-handed instruments deliver particular benefits in the fields of co-ordination and mental dexterity. Singing lessons have also become enormously popular.

With 19 school ensembles, ranging from jazz and folk to choirs, a dance band and orchestras, plus 18 bands who perform at our annual *RockFest* and our big musical productions, around 60 per cent of pupils are actively involved in music.

One reason is the chance to get to know people from different parts of the School. It is common to see a Lower School student performing alongside one of our Sixth Formers, working together as equals. What matters is ability and experience.

A growing number of pupils go on to study music at GCSE and A level. Far from being a soft option, pupils master a challenging curriculum that covers

“*Music helps me express emotions that I can't express in any other way. When I play, I feel invincible.*”

Lily, 12

the Western classical tradition, composing, preparation for performances and more. They develop a determination to strive for excellence, as well as resilience, strong powers of concentration, self-confidence and emotional intelligence.

Dauntseians regularly go on to study music or music technology but there have also been outstanding musicians who have taken degrees in the sciences, humanities and languages. It is not uncommon to study medicine with an A level in music at a number of Russell Group universities – senior consultants say that doctors who are musicians are easier to train in surgical skills. Imperial College and the Royal College of Music even offer a joint

honours degree in physics with music performance.

I am often asked by parents how to get children more interested in music. I tell them to encourage them, prompt them to practise on a regular basis and take an interest in what they do. Be their biggest fan and their best critic.

Above all, performing should be fun. When we enjoy ourselves, we learn more effectively and challenges are merely a temporary inconvenience. Our pupils sing and play their hearts out – and we applaud them.



SPORT ROCKS!



The researchers who recently reported that children in Great Britain are among the least active in the world clearly hadn't visited Dauntsey's. Sport is woven into the fabric of everyday life and the joy of movement counterbalances the intensity of study.*

With three to four timetabled hours of exercise a week and 18 further activities on offer, covering everything from aerobics and trampolining to dance and karate, our pupils choose action over membership of what's been dubbed Generation Inactive. Here, some of them explain why.

MABEL, 15

I knew I wanted to go to a sporty school and Dauntsey's just stood out. There's so much to try and you can get as involved as you want.

Sport gives my life balance and I absolutely love it, especially netball – I play as much as I can, about six or seven hours a week. Plus there's hockey, with two training sessions a week for the B team. And my main sport is riding.

I do some kind of sport in most breaks as well as formal training, which means I have to catch up on my work at home, but it's so worth it. It just means a bit of self-discipline, which isn't hard because I enjoy it so much.

Doing sport and studying is like living in a bilingual society – it can be demanding but exercise trains your brain as well as your body and the two things feed each other. Exercise definitely helps with stress. It burns off all the nerves and frustration so I feel steady and calm.

I also find that I solve academic problems when I'm playing sport – when the top of your mind is concentrating on something else, your subconscious comes up with answers. It's the perfect combination for me.

* Findings of the *Global Matrix of Grades* examining fitness, reported to the *International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health 2016*. England and Wales scored a D-, behind nations including Kenya, Zimbabwe, Brazil and India, while Scotland was joint worst.



ANNA, 16

Right from the First Form, sport is part of life here. You get used to spending hours every week being active and you'd miss it if it wasn't there. The choice is amazing. As well as the major, timetabled sports, there are dozens of clubs and options – a bit like an all-you-can-eat buffet.

My big thing is netball – I'm in the fourth team and I'm aiming for the thirds or even the seconds. Now I'm in the Sixth Form, I also dance and row, instead of playing hockey. I particularly enjoy team sports – you get to know people better and learn much more about them. Even with the dance and rowing, we do it in a group, so it's fun on a social level.

Being physically active gives you perspective on your work – an hour or so away from a desk. I can't imagine my future life without that.

JEFFREY, 17

I've always enjoyed sport, especially basketball and tennis. I like the competitive element. It's fun to pitch yourself against others, find out your strengths and weaknesses – and theirs.

You learn a lot about yourself through team sports. It's about working together towards a common goal, taking responsibility for the team as a whole instead of trying to be the star or blaming someone else when things go wrong. Tennis can feel a bit lonely, so I'm learning to deal with operating alone, which is mentally tougher.

Playing sport is such a physical boost, too. It makes you more energetic, stronger, clearer-headed. I really noticed when I was on study leave last year

and not playing so much sport – I felt I couldn't move as freely, didn't have as much energy. Sport definitely gives you back more than you put in.

FLO, 13

When I joined Dauntsey's at 11, I'd already done hockey and netball, while a lot of the others hadn't done any sport at all, so I had an advantage and was put in the B team for hockey. In the 2nd form, people had improved a lot, so I slipped down to the C team but I've worked hard and my skills have improved and now I'm back in the B team. I'm really happy about that.

I'm all about teams – I'm definitely a team player. We know each other's strengths and weaknesses and we help each other.

In the summer, we play tennis and do athletics and I couldn't tell you which is my favourite – both are! I'm in the tennis B team, I have extra tennis lessons and I'm really improving.

I'm a big athletics fan and I love running. I'm best at 1,500 metres but I also really like cross-country. I think that there are three types of cross-country runner: those who will try anything; those who say "I'll do it with my friends and it'll be fun"; and those who say "I really want to win!" I don't know anyone who doesn't want to do it.

When I play in a team, I'm really in the moment and my mind is totally onto it. When I'm running, I'm on my own and I take my thoughts elsewhere. I'm in my own little bubble.

After I've been doing sport I feel a sense of accomplishment and relief. I like to do my best



at everything, including sport, and it's a break in the day, which is welcome. You get a chance to go outside and see a bit of the world around us. I recently tried kayaking and really enjoyed it. I just want to try more sports now.

CALUM, 14

The great thing about sport at Dauntsey's is that you have the opportunity to try so many different things, to find what you really enjoy and to get better at it. If you're happy with what's on the timetable, that's OK. If you want more, or something different, there are clubs for everything from the major sports, such as cricket and tennis, to the less obvious, like rifle shooting or badminton.

I play rugby, hockey, cricket, squash and football. I've learned to give every sport the same level of effort, even if it doesn't come as easily to me. There's no pleasure in not trying – I need to know I've done my best.

You get such good support here, whatever you try. In the summer, I also play cricket in the local men's squad, so I'm playing with people with a lot more experience and getting different advice and expertise. It was a bit of an eye-opener when we were up against a guy who'd played under 18 cricket for the West Indies but you have to admire the skill.

Just getting outside and going for a run is probably the best way of getting rid of the stress of academic work. You come back to a fresh start and we all need that sometimes. That's a lesson I'll take away into my life after school.

Since the first Dauntsey's Christmas musical was staged in 1997, the School has built a reputation for breaking new dramatic ground, with school, youth or amateur premieres of big name shows including: *Cats*, *Miss Saigon*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Les Miserable* and *Billy Elliot*. **Rikki Jackson**, Director of Drama, explains what it takes to bring a production to fruition.



The MAKING of a MUSICAL

From small studio plays to summer extravaganzas such as *Mamma Mia!*, we stage many productions each year but the School has become best known for the December musical.

Over the last 20 years, hundreds of pupils have been involved and thousands have been entertained by them. Every show has been an overwhelming experience and a journey that everyone will remember well beyond their school years.

So it's not surprising that the question I'm most often asked about the December show is, "What's next?" My answer is always the same: "Break into my car and check what CD is playing."

CHOOSING THE SHOW...

The process of deciding can take months or even years. The big question is whether we have the right talent in the School at that time to pull off a particular show. In the case of *Billy Elliot*, I needed to know that we had boys who could dance that role – and after our successful staging of Matthew Bourne's *Lord of the Flies* in 2015, I knew the answer was yes. The Director of Music and Head of Dance are consulted and then we apply for the rights to stage the production.



Sometimes, we have been granted permission to put on shows that aren't available to other schools or amateur companies – *Chicago*, *Blood Brothers* and *Spamalot*, for example.

Old Dauntseian George Biggs has been central in this. Having worked in most theatres in the West End and with great impresarios such as Cameron Mackintosh, he has persuaded many important people to grant us permission to stage their work. Through George, we have also been able to perform in the West End three times. Every year we award our own Oscars, but ours are called *The Georges* in recognition of his support.

...AND THE CAST

Once a licence to perform is granted, I announce the show to the School, normally in early spring. Auditions take place at the end of the summer term – new pupils are invited to audition, either in the summer or in September. In *Billy Elliot*, new pupils took two of the lead roles and more than 20 new pupils took part in the show.

Inclusivity is vital. Nothing gives me greater satisfaction than seeing pupils involved in a show for the first time, whether they come from the First Form or the Upper Sixth. Equally, nothing

In March 2017, a cast of 100 Dauntsey's pupils, supported by our own large technical crew and full orchestra headed to the Novello Theatre in the West End, London to perform *Billy Elliot* for one night only. This was the third such invitation to perform a musical in the West End, after *Les Miserables* in 2003, and *Miss Saigon* in 2012.

The performance was no small undertaking. The December production had to be re-imagined and rehearsed again in order to fit the smaller stage that was built overnight on Saturday in front of the existing *Mamma Mia* set. The orchestra played via a screen from one of the theatre's bar areas, and sounded magnificent! Our technical crew rose to the challenge,



BILLY ELLIOT HITS THE WEST END

quickly becoming familiar with the Novello's lighting and sound system to create a magical production.

The atmosphere in the theatre was electric, from stepping through the doors of the Novello, right up to the well-deserved standing ovation at the end.

Rikki Jackson, Director of Drama, Dauntsey's said, "This was a fantastic opportunity for all those involved and an incredibly exciting event for the whole School community. The cast and orchestra performed brilliantly and adapted exceptionally well to the smaller stage and larger audience. It was a night to remember for us all."

makes me sadder than hearing students say at the end of their time at Dauntsey's, "I wish I'd done a December musical."

THE BUILD-UP

Rehearsals begin at the start of the autumn term and generally take place twice a day. There's a very detailed schedule, so we can take into account the cast's other activities, such as sport or music. I hate wasting people's time, so we rehearse small sections of the show, not necessarily in sequence, to avoid having people hanging around.

The idea of ensemble is at the heart of what we do. It's about taking part but also about enjoying rehearsals, making new friendships and being inspired by those you are working with.

Throughout the term, the set is built and Drama Technician Matthew Herring's tech crew make preparations for lighting and sound. The stage management team are all pupils and attend most rehearsals. Selecting the stage manager is as important for me as casting the lead role. The pupils take total ownership back stage during the run – there are no staff to be seen.

The Sunday before show week sees a massive rehearsal, with orchestra and cast coming together for the first time. Although some

“Over the years I have struggled with confidence but at each audition I've gone to I've become stronger and stronger.”

Aurora, Mrs Wilkinson in *Billy Elliot*

150

PUPILS INVOLVED
FROM RIGHT ACROSS THE
SCHOOL – 31 OF THEM
FOR THE FIRST TIME

members of the orchestra may have been to the odd rehearsal, it's the first time they all rehearse as one, along with the peripatetic teachers who play alongside them. It's a scary but ultimately exciting day.

The dress rehearsal takes place on the Monday and then we perform for five nights in front of packed houses. For *Billy Elliot*, we had 600 in every night. It is wonderful to see so much

support from the Dauntsey's family, from the local and broader community and also from so many past parents and pupils. It emphasises how important the December musical is, and has been, for so many people.

A RITE OF PASSAGE

Being part of the musical has become a rite of passage at Dauntsey's. People watch it, want to be part of it and are inspired to maintain incredibly high standards. We try to give every pupil the chance to be part of something special. It's a terrific experience that involves great responsibility, creativity, teamwork and sheer hard work and determination. But the end results are always memorable.

The dust soon settles once the show finishes: cast party, set dismantled, props and costumes cleared. And then the cycle begins again. What's next year? Wait and see....

PREPARING FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

By James O'Hanlon, Head of Careers

If I think back to the careers advice I was given at school, it seemed to be focussed almost entirely on the subject you were going on to study after school, rather than on any career *per se*. 'Jobs' were something a long way off and, for most of us, determined by chance rather than research or planning. Pupils today are faced with a myriad of choices, which can be overwhelming. I see my role as guiding them through these choices to enable them to take advantage of the many opportunities beyond the school gates.

Futurologists remind us that many of the jobs of the future don't exist today, just as roles involving social media were unknown only 15 years ago. Examples of well paid jobs we can anticipate include 'elderly well-being consultant', 'vertical farmer' (the farming of crops upwards rather than across flat fields) or 'nano-medic' (the creation of very small implants for health monitoring and self-medication). The only limit is our imagination.

Just as the world of work has transformed in the last few decades so, I am pleased to say, has the world of careers guidance. Today, developing the right skills for employers is no longer just subject-specific. Of far greater importance is guiding pupils towards the development of aptitudes and skills which are transferable to a range of different roles. Achieving excellent grades is often a given and other factors are now equally, if not more, important; how well you interview, whether you can show an aptitude for what you want to do and are genuinely excited by it, whether you can cope when things get tough, how quickly you learn and apply what you learn and how you can make yourself stand out from a crowd.

Interestingly, up to 70 per cent of roles offered by companies are 'degree-blind'* – ie it's a case of meeting the employers' criteria, regardless of the specifics of your degree. The first step for many job opportunities is made online, meaning you don't have the luxury of selling yourself through a CV and face-to-face interview when embarking on an application. The NHS, one of the UK's largest graduate employers, is just one organisation to adopt this recruitment strategy for non-medical roles. Developing strong numeracy and verbal reasoning skills and having an ability to navigate these screening procedures is crucial to moving to the interview stage where there is a chance to engage on a face-to-face basis.

In short, as careers counsellors, we need to be much smarter about the world of work and how we guide young people to work towards the best openings. Here at Dauntsey's, my role as careers advisor focuses on getting to know the pupils, their strengths and weaknesses, and guiding them towards the best opportunities available here that will take them on to the next stage. I am fortunate to have had experience in industry as well as teaching, and I invest a lot of energy in connecting the pupils with the world of work.

We run a programme of events where we highlight a particular sector. For example, a recent event focused on agri-business. A range of roles were represented by experts: biotech, food retailing, disease control in livestock, drone development, commodities trading and marketing. Sixth Form pupils had the opportunity to explore the multi-faceted aspects of this industry and the roles therein. They were surprised that, of the 20 people representing sectors within agri-business, only one was an actual farmer, and even he had another role in purchasing for a major food retailer.

Another event focused on sport. Many pupils here have a great love of sport – both viewing and participating in it. Twelve individuals representing different roles highlighted that behind every professional sportsperson lies a team of physiotherapists, sponsorship managers, marketing executives, nutritionists and agents. Certainly food for thought for those who realise they may not be the next Andy Murray but want to be in that world.

We also run evenings based on the speed-dating format where pupils have multiple mini-meetings with a wide range of professionals. All career events that we run include an aspect of networking where pupils are encouraged to "work the room" and recognise the importance of building contacts and being able to open up opportunities. We have a network of contacts across a wide range of industries, drawn from the community, Old Dauntseians and existing parents. They are very generous with their time and keen to share their knowledge and the journey they have taken to reach their career goals. This is enormously beneficial for the pupils to hear.

We encourage pupils to look at developing skills outside their areas of strength and competence. Many future roles will place them outside their comfort zone and being prepared to operate in such situations is an attractive attribute to display to a prospective employer. Bringing something extra always enhances an application and pupils are encouraged to have this in mind as they decide what to take up and what to drop during their school career. Can they keep up one language – so critical in today's global economy? Would drama improve their presentation skills? Would involvement in team sports show that they are a team player?

* Highflyers Recruitment



“My role as careers advisor focuses on getting to know the pupils, their strengths and weaknesses and guiding them towards the best opportunities available here which will take them on to the next stage.”

We help pupils find work experience, although there is increasing competition from university students seeking the same opportunities in the first years of their degree. There is a wider understanding that the sooner you can secure relationships in the world of work the better, it's not a case of leaving it until you graduate. Work experience can often come through contacts and connections which are crucial and it's never too early to start building them. We have a mentoring programme which gives pupils the opportunity to learn from Old Dauntseians and parents, pick their brains, explore options and discover new possibilities.

A new – and growing – option is the world of apprenticeships where work is combined with study. They present a great opportunity for some and can be a lot more cost-effective than the university route. Certainly, they move you onto the employment track sooner, although they can't replicate the life-enriching opportunity university presents to study a subject at the very highest level.

I am pleased to say that pupils leaving Dauntsey's go on to pursue a wide and varied range of careers. Looking back at School class lists and photographs, it's fascinating to reflect

on what they have gone on to be – barristers and solicitors, doctors and nurses, journalists and press secretaries, chemical engineers and F1 design engineers, biotechnologists and Artificial Intelligence designers, architects and museum curators, NGO officers and social workers and, I am pleased to say, teachers and lecturers.

All of them, I hope, would acknowledge that the route to their chosen career has not always been straightforward and that in most cases it is the attributes beyond academic results which have made the difference to their journey.

We live in an ever-changing world but one certainty is that young people must be prepared for change, continually expand their skill set and seize every opportunity that comes their way.

THE WORLD ABOUT US

By **Jon Tyler**, Deputy Head (Academic)



“If we can't look after the world in which we live and rise to the environmental challenges around us, nobody will have a future. Our role is to ensure that our pupils know this and that they take this message into the world after school.”

James O'Hanlon, Head of Careers and BGT

The 21st century seems set to be as eventful as the last, plagued as it has already been by political and economic turmoil, the rise of religious extremism and concerns about climate change. Tempting then for the community here at Dauntsey's to hunker down in our rural idyll where the outside world need not intrude.

In fact, the reality is quite the reverse. Pupils and teachers throughout the School go out of their way to actively engage with the issues of the day, from global warming to poverty, democracy to human rights, religious conflict to ethics. This connection with the wider world runs through the fabric of the School thanks, in part, to Alderman William Dauntsey, Master of the Worshipful Company of Mercers, who founded the School back in 1542. His sense of citizenship, charitable giving and public service runs through the ethos of the School as do our close links with the Mercers' Company in the City of London.

Our charitable fundraising programme is an integral part of School life. The pupils choose a charity to support each year and every House devises a range of fundraising ideas which the pupils organise and run themselves – be it a cake sale, a runathon or a staff versus pupils Boules competition. There is no end to the ingenious ways they persuade people to part with their money for a good cause! In the past decade, we have raised an impressive £200,000 for our chosen charities, ranging from Help for Heroes, Teenage Cancer Trust and Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

“The connection with the Mercers' is woven through the school, both in the fabric of the buildings and the support and guidance they provide our community.”

Further afield, we have a long-standing relationship with a Romanian orphanage, which groups of Sixth Form pupils visit annually. Most of the children at the orphanage live in poverty and have hugely complex emotional and sometimes behavioural problems. Some are quite severely disabled and many have HIV. Dauntsey's pupils raise funds through the year to finance new equipment for the orphanage and a week-long play scheme which they develop and run. During their visit, they discover the shocking reality of poverty and experience real hardship for themselves. It teaches them that other children might be grateful for something as basic as a Biro, something we take for granted and that education, which we see as a right, is a privilege to millions of children around the world. Pupils make a human and emotional connection with the children they support and learn that fund-raising has a specific purpose.

The Mercers Livery Company also lends its name to our highly respected *Mercers' Lectures*, which have included eminent speakers from all walks of life; Steve Backshall, Kate Adie, Sir Tim Smit, Jeremy Bowen and Mariella Frostrup to name just a few. Sixth formers enjoy an informal supper with the speakers before they deliver their lecture to pupils and members of the local community. We are privileged to attract such high-profile speakers and pupils gain invaluable insights through engaging with them at such close quarters.

A further window on the world is provided by the complementary curriculum which runs in the from First to Fifth Form. It features topics such as modes of governance, the legacy of Empire, human rights, global institutions, cultural diversity and the role of the media. School life should not be just about exams and this programme encourages pupils to explore the world beyond rigid boundaries and understand how other cultures and societies function. It is not only invaluable for the pupils' intellectual development, it is essential for their personal growth.

We are fortunate to have pupils from around the world here at Dauntsey's. They help us explore a variety of cultural perspectives on any subject and encourage all pupils to think beyond their own social background, ethnicity and received opinions. This comes to the fore in particular during discussions held by our Debating Society. The aim is to encourage participants to think independently, question apparent certainties and explore alternative perspectives. Some lively and passionate debates have been held!

Environmental issues, too, are hotly debated in School, perhaps not surprisingly, given that Friends of the Earth founder Richard Sandbrook is an Old Dauntseian, with an award promoting sustainable development in his name. There is a well-established pupil society, The Big Green Thing, which raises awareness of green issues



and promotes sustainability in School. It has led projects including the installation of solar-powered showers, geothermal heating, a biomass waste digester and tree planting, as well as organising a conference that attracted leading environmentalists. Thanks to this pupil-led society, environmental issues are high on the agenda when new developments for the School are discussed. Our state-of-the-art pavilion is a great example. It was designed to be environmentally friendly, has an EPC of 21 (an extremely low A rating), a sedum roof and uses a ground source heat pump to extract heat energy from the ground, via a series of boreholes, to provide heat for the underfloor heating and hot water system.

Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Here at Dauntsey's we believe that every one of us can make a real difference, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems such as climate change, poverty, intolerance and religious conflict. We make sure that education here is not confined by the curriculum and does not stop at the school gates. Pupils are encouraged to think beyond the confines of their own lives and the formal curriculum, to decode the world around them, develop insights into major global, cultural and social institutions, trends and events and equip themselves for the real world after School.

Dauntseians may start by raising money or awareness for causes close to their hearts, by analysing the validity of different systems of governance or by working to reduce hardship or pollution. Ultimately, I hope our pupils will have the potential to go on to make the world a better place.



ADVENTURE

We are lucky to enjoy the open space of a 150 acres estate and make the most of this space with our adventure education programmes. We aim to push our pupils out of their comfort zone and bring a spirit of adventure to everything they do.



Adventure is an exciting, unusual and sometimes hazardous experience, according to the dictionary. It is also an essential part of life at Dauntsey's – not simply an event but something that teaches invaluable life skills and changes attitudes and behaviour for the better. Sam Moore, our Head of Adventure Education, explains.



LESSONS FOR LIFE

My teenage years are some way behind me but not so far that I can't remember vividly the pressure I felt from sitting

public examinations. It's fair to say that today this pressure has only increased as universities demand ever higher grades and parents expect a good return on their significant investment in school fees.

The one thing that kept me sane then – and still provides an escape – was the ability to get outdoors, explore and experience adventure outside the classroom. Adventure not only helps children let off steam, I would go so far as to say it plays a vital role in equipping them with the necessary skills and behaviours to set them up for life after School.

“Through our adventure programme, the confidence and self-esteem of the pupils rises dramatically as they discover what can be achieved, often under challenging conditions.”

Sam Moore, Head of Adventure

Understanding risk and not shying away from it is an important life skill. Pupils can develop their risk management through being exposed to it while they still have the support of the School environment. Adventure education enables pupils to demonstrate and adopt behaviours that will help them lead a fruitful and interesting life, in which they are organised and flexible, willing to have a go and learn from their experiences.

Regrettably, we live in an increasingly risk-averse world and the perception of danger, along with a range of Health & Safety guidelines, can make delivering truly adventurous experiences at School something of a challenge. Parents are, understandably, concerned about their children's wellbeing. However, with detailed parent briefings, clear communication, careful planning and a bit of imagination, it can be done. Our adventure programme at Dauntsey's is made up of two aspects:

Accessible adventure consists of programmes where large numbers of pupils have short experiences that serve as an introduction to

adventure and to various activities. These serve both as educational experiences in their own right and as a gateway to “high adventure” for those that enjoy them and find them rewarding. The potential for misadventure is much lower, hence the term “accessible”. An example might be learning to kayak on the Kennet and Avon canal, camping in the School grounds, or a night hike on Salisbury Plain.

High adventure includes longer-haul trips, activities and experiences that involve relatively small numbers of pupils participating at a high level, normally with a high staff to pupil ratio. Typically, this type of adventure will require time and dedication from the pupils and they will have to work to achieve specific skills and competence at a given activity which will allow them to access remote or challenging environments. The potential for misadventure is greater in high adventure and care must be taken to ensure that participants are ready and willing to engage with it. Parental reassurance and involvement is crucial, not just from a safety perspective but to help encourage and motivate



LESSONS FOR LIFE

continued...

_____ *“We were staying in a little hut and it was freezing and everyone was moaning and groaning. But looking back, I’m really glad that I did it because you get a sense of achievement.”*

Third Form pupil

participants when the going gets tough. Examples of high adventure might be participating in the Devizes to Westminster canoe race, trekking in the Himalaya or crewing our Tall Ship, *Jolie Brise*.

Younger pupils develop a passion for adventure through the accessible adventure programme which is then developed and expanded as they move up the School when they can take on more challenging activities in the high adventure programmes.

The results we observe are remarkable. Pupils who started with us being relatively quiet and cautious by nature, grow in confidence and are willing to take on new experiences. Those who you might not immediately view as “the outdoors type” can demonstrate great resilience and good humour in the face of adversity. I particularly enjoy seeing pupils learning to be as concerned for others as for themselves and – most importantly – being able to admit and then correct their mistakes. Equally, the more confident ones learn to follow leadership before they are then able to provide leadership when needed.

Developing these traits can take courage. Exploration inevitably involves a few wrong turns, so we work to build the confidence needed to tackle challenges that pupils may not believe they can do, safe in the knowledge



that, if things go wrong, we are here to guide their learning. As a result, pupils’ confidence and self-esteem rise dramatically as they discover what can be achieved, often under challenging conditions – and this pays noticeable dividends back in the classroom in terms of academic progress.

I have been lucky enough to develop a career out of adventure but I would argue that adventure activities at school create a platform for pupils to set themselves apart and, as a consequence, develop into the person that they aspire to be. In short, what you learn through adventure can have a profound effect on the development of your character and your entire future.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Dauntsey's is the only school in the country to have its own Tall Ship, the famous Jolie Brise.



Named after France's equivalent of the Beaufort scale force five wind, she was launched in 1913 at Le Havre and, after refits, is still essentially the same boat. She is a category 0 – allowed to go anywhere in the world, at any time. Crewed by Dauntsey's pupils, she's won hundreds of races, including three *Tall Ships Race Series*. But there is more to sailing *Jolie Brise* than racing, says Head of Sailing Toby Marris.

"For some pupils, it's social. Others are there for the sailing and they all take a great deal of pride in the boat, but for all of them, it's a big confidence-builder. They walk a foot taller when they come off the boat, especially after their first time.

"A father took me to one side and said, 'You took my boy away and he's returned a man' after he'd sailed the North Atlantic. The crews have seen whales and dolphins. One played football against the crew of a Norwegian whaling ship at midnight in the Arctic. Another saw Independence Day fireworks in New York harbour. They've seen waterspouts and storm petrels landing on the deck. They've seen incredible things that they could not have experienced anywhere else. For some, it's life-changing."

Here, two student sailors give their take on life on *Jolie Brise*.

OLLIE BARNES – Old Dauntseian

Ollie Barnes left Dauntsey's in 2016 and has sailed on *Jolie Brise* several times, most recently in the *Rendez-vous 2017 Tall Ships Regatta* where he was Bosun on transatlantic crossings from Greenwich to Bermuda and returning from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Le Havre.

My first impressions... were that *Jolie Brise* was going to be bigger, from what the older pupils told me, but she is a really homely boat. Of the Tall Ships, she's really a working boat and I like that about her. Other Tall Ships are massive square riggers like in *Pirates of the Caribbean* films. *Jolie Brise* is one of the smaller Tall Ships but that doesn't mean she's not the quickest. She's comfortable, if a bit tight at times.

The best bit... was my first transatlantic crossing during the *Rendez-vous 2017 Tall Ships* when we were at sea for 20 days. It was quite something to be so far from land for such a long period of time. There were just 11 of us working as a tight-knit team to navigate the Atlantic Ocean.

We were lucky with the winds and the arrival in Bermuda was spectacular. It felt like landing in a tropical paradise after all those days at sea. The atmosphere was amazing, made all the better by being able to enjoy some of the *America's Cup* action which was being hosted by Bermuda while we were there.

The worst bit... was during the first leg of the race from Torbay to Sines, Portugal. We were

ALL HANDS ON DECK

continued...

“I was in a dinghy going past *Jolie Brise* and I thought it was like a pirate ship.”

experiencing 25 knots of wind, moderate seas and I was steering and sleeping in four hour shifts. At times I asked myself how long can I keep this going? But I reminded myself that the wind would drop eventually and I just had to keep focused on the task in hand. We won that leg of the race so it was worth it in the end.

I've learned... that teamwork and resilience are key. You might not know anyone going on the boat with you, so you learn to make friends quickly, iron out any differences or irritations and have a really good time. I know myself a bit better too – I like to keep busy and can turn my hand to most things – not always sailing-related – for example, I tackled fixing a broken fridge on one leg – you have to be pretty resourceful at sea!

From a skills perspective, I have learnt to sail in its rawest form – there are no winches on *Jolie Brise* – it's very physical but also mentally challenging. You need to know how to get the best out of her and, if you can do that, you can sail any modern vessel.

I won't get on board without... a diary – I took a diary on my first transatlantic crossing and really enjoyed recording my experiences. A pillow is also great luxury after a shift on deck!

Sailing now... has become a passion. Sailing on

Jolie Brise at Dauntsey's was a truly unique opportunity. It not only taught me a lot about teamwork and pushing myself out of my comfort zone, but also enabled me to compete at the highest level against teams from all over the world. I have seen people at Dauntsey's who weren't the classically sporty types really come into their own on-board *Jolie Brise* – it's a fantastic opportunity and I would encourage any pupils to get involved and make the most of it.

HARRIET STEPTOE – Sixth Form

Sixth former Harriet Steptoe has been on *Jolie Brise* several times, most recently on the return transatlantic crossing from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Le Havre in the *Rendez-vous 2017 Tall Ships Regatta*.

My first impressions... were when I was about six years old, before I joined Dauntsey's, I was in a dinghy going past *Jolie Brise* and I thought it was like a pirate ship – a really cool boat. When I actually got on it three years ago I still thought it was big and I loved the wooden decks.

The best bit... was during a race between Antwerp to Lisbon. We were at sea for 11 days but were becalmed so had no option but to make the most of the great weather and had a lot of fun swimming off *Jolie Brise*. We had a

great crew, everyone got on really well and it was a truly memorable experience.

The worst bit... was when my bunk was soaked with sea water from a leak. Even though we tried to dry it out, it was still damp and crusty with salt. I ended up using other people's bunks while they were up on deck!

I've learned... to get on with anybody. You learn to make friends and get on with people really fast – when you're all sailing. There's lots of teamwork when you're doing the ropes or changing sails and everyone gets on with it. When you're racing, you have to be resilient and just keep going – it's tough at times but you gain a huge sense of satisfaction.

I won't get on board without... a pillow – a luxury when you are so short of sleep!

Sailing now... I've fallen in love with it. My grandparents and my dad sail a lot, so I do it with them. I'll definitely do things like boat deliveries when I'm older. I've done my day skipper theory course and am planning to do my practical course next. We are very lucky to have *Jolie Brise* at Dauntsey's – I would encourage anyone to sign up – it's an amazing experience.



1st

PLACE FOR *JOLIE BRISE* IN TALL SHIPS RACE SERIES 2016



THE JOLIE BRISE STORY

Toby Marris, Head of Sailing

The sailing club was started around 40 years ago by pupils, helped by a housemaster. They put an advert in *The Times* looking for work in exchange for sailing and this led to the use, and then the gift, of Griffin II. Brought back to school and refurbished, she later broke free from her moorings in a winter storm and was a total loss – but well insured.

At the time, *Jolie Brise* was owned by a Portuguese family, the Labatos, and moored at Lisbon. During the Portuguese revolution in 1975, Luis Lobato gained permission to take her out for a day sail – and kept going until he reached London.

For the next few years she was moored in St Katherine Docks, where Lobato's children lived

on board while at school and then university. He was then keen to sell the boat to someone who would teach young kids to sail, which was how *Jolie Brise* had been used in Lisbon.

Labato approached Exeter Maritime Museum, who knew Dauntsey's were looking for a boat. The museum put up half the money and Griffin II's insurance paid the rest. A 20-year lease was agreed but the museum went bankrupt in 1997 and Dauntsey's bought its share from the receivers.

At much the same time, I was appointed full-time head of sailing and it was decided that the boat would be used commercially when students were not being taught on it, to help cover costs. Today, *Jolie Brise* is still used to teach sailing and is regularly chartered out.

Louisa Carter, an *Old Dauntseian* describes how overcoming her fears to face physical challenges taught her to understand what can be achieved with a bit of hard work and tenacity.

TEEN SPIRIT – GIVE IT A GO

One of my earliest memories is being on a boat with my grandfather. He was a keen sailor and insisted on taking us out whenever the opportunity arose. Although

I loved these trips, every time the waves got a little too big or the outboard motor failed to start when the wind died, I would silently promise myself never to stray too far from land. I was always very relieved when I was finally back on *terra firma*.

I was in my last year of school and quite a bit had changed since then. In 2014 my parents announced that my father's new job would relocate us from rural Wiltshire to Pennsylvania, USA. I was a day pupil at Dauntsey's School with two of my sisters and another sister already at university. We were given the choice of moving with them to the USA or boarding in the UK.

This was a potentially life-changing decision for me but – no doubt much to my mother's disappointment – it wasn't a tough one. Leaving Dauntsey's would mean no more sailing on the school's Tall Ship, the *Jolie Brise*, and that was unthinkable.

Let me rewind a few years. I started school as a bit of a tomboy, not overly confident, pretty cautious and not from a particularly sporty family. I enjoyed the outdoors but was not the bravest of sorts and certainly loved home life. However, as I progressed through school, I discovered I was quite good at team sports and began to realise that I was pretty competitive. I worked hard at hockey and ended up in the first team. I think this was the moment when I understood I could influence what happened to me if I really put my mind to it.

For a school located in a landlocked county, it is something of an anomaly that Dauntsey's has its own Tall Ship but pupils have been sailing this 56' gaff-rigged pilot cutter since 1977 and everyone is encouraged to have a go. I was very nervous on my first *Jolie Brise* outing and memories of those sailing trips with my

grandfather came flooding back as I watched dry land fade into the distance. I soon realised that sailing a Tall Ship is all about teamwork and having confidence in yourself and in each other. Having completed my first excursion, I had caught the sailing bug and couldn't wait to get out again.

It was on one of those sailing trips that someone suggested I had a go at the Devizes to Westminster canoe race – otherwise known ominously as "The Canoeists' Everest". My first reaction was that it wasn't for me – too risky, too hard, too grubby, too daunting altogether. But, thinking it over, I realised that I had overcome my reservations about sailing and discovered something I loved. Perhaps taking on this paddling challenge might turn out to be a great experience.

Fast forward a few months and I found myself with my team mate in a two-man canoe, freezing cold, cursing the teacher who was training us for the race and bitterly regretting my decision to sign up for this challenge. On day three of the actual race, when thunder and lightning circled around us and we were struggling to keep afloat on a choppy river, I did hit something of a wall. But all the discomfort and regrets fell away when we headed down the Thames, passing all the familiar central London landmarks. As we paddled hard, I realised that the more you work for something, the better the feeling when you finally achieve your goal. I am now so grateful for the opportunity to have taken part. Success is not always about having fun.

_____ *"The experiences I have had outside the classroom - on the Jolie Brise and elsewhere – have made me the person I am today."*



It's true to say that the confidence I have gained from sailing and doing the canoe race has helped me mentally with preparation for my exams too. With the right planning, attitude and a sprinkling of confidence, I now know that I can achieve a lot.

The experiences I have had outside the classroom – on the *Jolie Brise* and elsewhere – have made me the person I am today. On leaving Dauntsey's I want to pursue a career in adventure education or water sports. I would like to be able to follow my dreams through my work like Emily Penn, an inspirational yachtswoman and the youngest and only female recipient of *Yachtmaster of the Year*. She has managed to follow her dreams through her work. I would love to be able to do that too.

I would be lying if I didn't admit to wondering sometimes what life would have been like if I had opted to move to the sunnier climes of the USA. Different places, different people no doubt but I don't think I would have had the same opportunities as I had staying at Dauntsey's. And I hope my grandfather is very proud of me.

This article was first published in School House Magazine in 2015. Louisa Carter is currently studying Spanish at Edinburgh University and continues to sail on *Jolie Brise*, most recently from Bermuda to Boston, acting as ship's Bosun.

ADMISSIONS

*Dauntsey's is very proud of the size and diversity of our intake;
160 new pupils join us each year from over 100 different schools.*



800

PUPILS

500

DAY PUPILS

300

BOARDERS

355

STAFF

250 +

SIXTH FORM PUPILS

The Admissions Team oversees the admissions process at all entry points; 11+, 13+ and 16+, as well as looking after all visits to Dauntsey's by prospective parents and pupils.



ADMISSIONS TO DAUNTSEY'S

Application is made by completing the registration form and returning it, together with the registration fee of £100, to the Admissions Office.

Two open mornings are held each year in the spring and autumn and small group tours are held regularly on a Saturday morning throughout the year (details at www.dauntseys.org). Families are most welcome to contact the Admissions Office for an individual appointment.

Admission to Dauntsey's at all points is subject to examination and interview (some Lower Sixth places by predicted I/GCSE grades).

Scholarships are available at entry to First Form, Third Form and Lower Sixth to a maximum value of 10 per cent of fee remission.

GUIDANCE ON ADMISSION PROCEDURES

11+
Entry is for both day and boarding places and 80 places are available. The entrance examinations (English, maths and verbal reasoning) and interview are held in late January and all candidates are considered for an academic scholarship or Head Master's award as a result of this process. Music awards, offering free tuition on one or more musical instrument, are awarded following an audition and take place at the same time.

Sports awards are available following practical assessment and interview. Details are sent to all registered in late November preceding entry.

13+
A total of 40 new places are available and entry is usually limited to boarding places only. Those prepared for Common Entrance (CE) take the Common Entrance pre-tests during the early part of the spring term of their Year 7 at their prep school and are then invited for a "Taster" at Dauntsey's in early March, when they will take part in activities and have an interview. Those not prepared for CE take entrance examinations (English, maths and verbal reasoning) in the October of their Year 8.

There are academic, science, music and sports scholarships; awards for drama, Art and DT and the Jolie Brise all-rounder award. Examinations, auditions and interviews take place in the November preceding entry (Year 8). Further details and entry forms are available at www.dauntseys.org/admissions and from the Admissions Office.

14+
Occasional boarding places may be available for entry to the Fourth Form (Year 10). Enquiries should be made to the Admissions Office.

Sixth Form
Between 35-40 places are available and entry is open to both boarding and day pupils. Prospective pupils should be predicted at least three level 7 (or A grades) and three level 6 (B grades) at I/GCSE. Reports and references

from current schools are requested in November when interviews are held and conditional places are offered on 1 December each year. For those not taking I/GCSE, or those who wish to have an unconditional offer, entrance examinations in English, maths and a general paper take place in early November.

We offer academic scholarships, sport, performing arts and boarding awards. Examinations, auditions and interviews for these take place in early November. Further details, dates and entry forms are available at www.dauntseys.org/admissions or from the Admissions Office.

Choral Clerkships
Twenty Choral Clerkships are available annually, by audition, to senior choristers.

Bursaries
In order to widen access to the School, Dauntsey's has two bursary options. The Dauntsey's 100% Bursary Scheme is intended for children whose parents are unable to afford any portion of the school fees. To be considered for an award, applicants must submit to comprehensive means testing. Selection is by includes an entrance examination and interview in November for 13+ and 16+ applicants or January for 11+ applicants.

Scholarship supplements are available to those who have been offered a scholarship or award and who need additional financial assistance with the school fees. Application is made by contacting the Registrar.

We aim to have a welcoming and informative admissions process; please do not hesitate to contact the Admissions Team at admissions@dauntseys.org, if you have any questions or queries about Dauntsey's.

Joanna Sagers, Registrar
j.sagers@dauntseys.org
+44 (0)1380 814504



DAILY ROUTINE

All Dauntsey's pupils, whether day or boarding, begin their day with registration and a short meeting with their housemaster or housemistress in their house. On weekdays, there are eight taught periods in the day, while on Saturdays there are six.

Two long breaks are scheduled during the day, giving pupils plenty of time for clubs and societies (there are more than 80 to choose from) and prep (which takes place in Houses). Day pupils usually arrive home after taking part in a club and completing some prep for the following day. Boarding pupils also have either one or two evening preps scheduled.

MONDAY – FRIDAY

07.45	Boarders' breakfast
08.25	House registration
08.35	Assembly/Service
08.55 – 09.30	Lesson 1
09.35 – 10.10	Lesson 2
10.15 – 10.50	Lesson 3
10.50 – 11.15	Break
11.15 – 11.50	Lesson 4
11.55 – 12.30	Lesson 5
12.35 – 13.10	Lesson 6
	<i>Lunch is served between 12.00 – 13.30</i>
13.15 – 13.50	Lesson 7
13.50 – 14.45	Long break – clubs and societies
14.45 – 15.20	Lesson 8
15.25 – 16.00	Lesson 9
16.00	Tea
16.20 – 17.20	Day House prep or clubs and societies
17.30	Transport departs
18.00	Boarders' prep
19.00	Supper
19.45 – 20.45	Boarders' prep

SATURDAY

08.25	House registration
08.35 – 09.10	Lesson 1
09.15 – 09.50	Lesson 2
09.55 – 10.30	Lesson 3
10.30 – 10.50	Break
10.50 – 11.25	Lesson 4
11.30 – 12.05	Lesson 5
12.10 – 12.45	Lesson 6
	<i>Lunch is served between 12.00 – 13.30</i>
Afternoon	Team matches
16.30	Transport departs
18.20	Boarders' registration
18.30	Supper
19.00	House events/free time

SUNDAY

10.00	Morning service <i>or</i>
18.00	Evening service
10.30	Brunch
11.00	House activities/free time
18.30	Supper
20.00	Evening registration

Please see www.dauntseys.org for:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Fees | Term dates |
| List of Governors | School calendar |
| List of teaching staff | Curriculum detail |
| Leavers' destinations | Admissions and dates for application |
| Exam results by subject | How to find us |



“For me, the winning factor at Dauntsey’s is the open, friendly and fun atmosphere in the school whenever I visit.”

Dauntsey's parent



TRANSPORT LINKS

Train

Pewsey Station to London Paddington: 1 hour 10 mins
Westbury Station to London Paddington: 1 hour 30 mins
Salisbury Station to London Waterloo: 1 hour 30 mins

Road

Dauntsey's School to Heathrow Airport: 1 hour 30 mins
(via M3)



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