BEAMINSTER TIMES

Ambition · Service · Kindness

Summer 2021

Our Values: Ambition - Service - Kindness (ASK)

Summer 2021

Welcome to the 2021 Summer edition of the Beaminster Times which I hope you will enjoy reading.

As we approach the end of this extraordinary school year, it has been heartening to return to a semblance of normality with a multitude of events across the curriculum.

These have included inspirational outside speakers, a wonderfully competitive Sports Day, farewells to long-serving colleagues, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, Year 8 Graduation, Year 11 and 13 Proms, and the well-deserved rewards trip for Years 7-10.

As we are all too aware, the backdrop to our lives in these past 18 months has been defined and directed by Covid-19. However, as reflected in the Lockdown 3.0 article, there will be much that we have learnt about ourselves and the local community that we will want to keep, develop and move forward.

Therefore, I am delighted that a large group of our student ambassadors are working with Imperial College and Beaminster Town Council on a unique project called ***Sustainable You***.

This will capture the views and creative ideas of our young people and develop projects so that we can build a greener, more sustainable local community.

We are committed to providing our students with ambitious opportunities that develop not only themselves but provide a wider service to the community, particularly after this challenging year. This includes working closely with The Prout Bridge Project to support our students with their health and wellbeing, offering an enhanced number of clubs and activities for the community and employing an independent Careers Advisor to encourage high aspirations.

Finally, we have greatly appreciated the support and trust placed in us by our parents and carers, as well as those in the wider community. Importantly, we have faced these difficulties together and, I am sure, built stronger, more resilient, relationships for the future.

I wish you all a restful, and safe, summer.

Mr Hales
Headteacher, Beaminster School

An Olympian Visits

It's not every day that you get to meet an Olympic athlete and Masterchef competitor, and seasoned Newshounds Kai Kenway, Milly Cross and Ruth Sloper seized their chance to question Bruce Tasker, a member of the Team GB 4-man Bobsleigh team who won a Bronze medal at the Sochi Olympics in 2014. This is their interview.

You originally started as a 200- and 400-meter runner, who or what inspired you to try out bob-sleighing?

Bit of a right place, right time for me. Where we trained at Bath, the home of British bobsleighing, I got to know the team that were training on the same track, and I got to know the pilot, John James Jackson, along with the team leader who asked me to come out and try it, they were my inspiration. Prior to that I didn't know much about bobsleighing at all.

What was it like to be in the Olympics?

It was brilliant! It was always my dream and ambition and I thought it was going to be in athletics, but bobsleighing was absolutely amazing. The Olympics are the highest echelon in sport, you can't get any higher, and it's only once every four years. It's hugely amazing not only to qualify but also to arrive fit and healthy. Within that four year cycle so many people can get injured, so you can miss out and must wait another four year, and particularly all those who have missed on last year with Toyoko being postponed. It's a huge thing to miss it if you're training for that very specific year and then you miss it due to injury, you could miss it for life. It's an amazing feeling to be part of a relatively small number of people in the world. It's a huge privilege.

Is there a women's bobsleigh team?

There is, yes, at the moment I actually coach one of the teams. There are different tiers of competition. We have the World Cup, which is the big stage, and then you have those athletes in the World Cup compete at the Olympic Games. Below that we have the Europa Cup which is just in Europe, and then also the North America Cup with tracks in Canada and North America as well. So, we have a team that is on the Europa Cup at the moment, that's the one that I coach, and then there is the Olympic pilot, Misha McNeil who went to the last Olympics and came eighth, which is the best result from a female team ever!

The women actually compete in a new event now as well, which is the monobob, where men have two- and four-man events, the women now have mono- and two-women sleighs. There were traditionally only ever two-woman events but they quite rightly wanted to be on a level playing field and have two events just like the men did. That's where there wasn't sadly enough participation to do two- and four-woman, also there's a slight safety concern with four-woman sleighs because by nature the women in the sport tend to be smaller, so when they are in the sleigh it can crash as there is a lot more movement and you get rattled around inside. In the four-man, when you crash you are wedged in like sardines so you don't move. You are really stuck in there so it's really quite safe, but they tried out the four-woman and they had a few nasty accidents, so they decided to stop that and now they do mono as well. If we qualify the same pilot will go in the mono- and two-woman bob this year.

Newshounds Ruth, Milly and Kai interviewing Bruce Tasker

What position did you have in the bobsleigh?

I did all of them throughout my career; I like to say that I got lazier as I got older really because I used to do 400m, then I dropped to 200m for running, and then when I started bobsleigh I was on the back of the sledge and you push it out 55m, then I was the number three and pushed about 40m, number two is 20m, and then I was driving at the front where you push through 15 to 20m and then jump in!

So, I did try all of them but had my most success at number three. You've got your pilot, number two, number three and your brakeman, so I spent most of my career as number three, pushing on the right-hand side of the sledge.

An Olympian Visits

What are your favourite memories from the Europa Cup in Altenburg?

I was also there in the World Cup which didn't go to plan! But the Europa Cup, I placed second and we were only 100th of a second off the start record! Because they're the engine that gets it all going at the beginning, and to give credit to the brake person, the first 50m are timed to give a measure of how well you have pushed off. The conditions need to be perfect for the start record to be broken and they were really good at this time, just 100th of a second off. It would have been the first time a British Team would have shared, or have had the start record, so we were really gutted to be so close but it was an amazing result. I was actually in the lead at the first run and the Latvian beat me on the second run, his overall time was better than mine.

What advice would you give someone who wanted to become an athlete or a bobsledder?

When you are young it is important to try lots of things because you just don't know how you are going to mature into an adult. I had my success at athletics because I was big at school, I was one of the tallest, heaviest and strongest students which meant when I was competing against people of the same age I was able to beat them quite often. When I then became a senior athlete, I was too big and trying to do 400m at my weight was very difficult. I was lean and muscley, that was the way my body wanted to be, I was always destined to be quite big and that's why I changed. I would regularly turn up to races and I would be heavier than the others, I wasn't fat, but it was a hindrance when trying to run a long way so I dropped down to 200m.

My advice would be explore lots of different things. I always wish I'd done a martial art because it's really good control of your body, not about punching people but about using your body, Gymnastics is also really good for that. You don't have to consider these to be your long-term sport, but they are really good for teaching you facets which go into a sport you can focus on.

Team sports are really good for eye coordination, I played football, people used to start kicking me as I was fast, so I played basketball instead. I needed that team sport element. It keeps your fitness up, helps with your core training when you get older you have to start focusing on preparing your body for exercise so you don't get hurt training, and team sports are a really good way of doing that.

Try lots of things, see what you like, what you are good at, but you have to enjoy it because you are good at what you enjoy and put the effort in.

An injury can affect your career, what would you have done if you had been injured and couldn't have been an athlete?

I went to university and studied Biochemistry which is something I really love. I love sciences, particularly biology, and I really like zoology so I would have probably tried to do a Masters in zoology or marine biology, that was something that really interested me. I love to go diving, fishing and nature. I would have tried to pursue something in that. Who knows. if MasterChef had gone a bit better, I might have owned a restaurant by now!

How intensive was the training when you were preparing for the Olympics?

We would train for six days a week, for several hours at a time. Before we were able to train full time it was three or four times a week as I was also having to work. Once you go professional or full time you can dedicate more time to training.

It's not just the training, but all the other things around it like your recovery, and you can focus on your nutrition a lot easier because you have time to prepare it, rather than just grabbing a sandwich on the way to training. When you become full time, you can focus on all those extra things.

We always say train smart, not hard. It's all about doing the right amount of everything. We would train usually twice a day for two hours at a time and do our recovery around it. So, it would be full days, four to five hours or training, six days a week – tough!

An Olympian Visits

How do you fit a normal life around your training?

It's definitely a challenge and I am lucky my partner has always been very supportive and understanding because of the time spent away. The main challenge with bobsleighing is you can't do it in Britain, you have to go abroad for it. Most of the tracks are around the Alps in Germany, France, Italy, Austria and some in North America.

It's not always easy to have visitors, my partner did come out regularly but it's a long time spent away, which is a challenge, as is making sure you stay in touch. When I first started, we didn't have WhatsApp, you had to rely on Skype, which is probably very archaic to you guys and it never worked as the Wifi was rubbish back then, so keeping in touch with friends and family was difficult. You had to put a lot of effort in to make sure you had balance. Working alongside training was tough and became easier when we became full time, but when working you had no time left in the day to dedicate to relationships, whether that was friends or family.

How happy were you when you got your medal and met the Princess Royal?

I was immensely happy! It felt like closure, a long run saga. The rumours started after Sochi, within a year we heard strong rumours that the Russian team were going to be disqualified and that they were appealing. They had five counts of allegations and only needed one to fail. They were conspiring to dope and they had doping samples; they had committed all these different crimes and only needed one to stick so we were pretty confident.

We had to go through a lengthy process of them appealing and arguing it back and so on. It really got dragged out, for years we kept seeing in the papers a new report: "Britain are due to be upgraded to Bronze" but it had been said before, and then a few weeks later the same thing was said over and over again. We soon became numb and lost hope, and when it finally happened I was working for a development company making a sports app for phones. I arrived early in the morning and got a phone call from the person who leads the whole of the Olympic team … when he phones you know its's serious … and he told me we were going to get the medal!

It was perfect way to be told, I was by myself in the office with great views and I cried with sheer joy. We had closure, it was such a moment, the ending to our perfect story. It had been like someone had ripped the pages out of the end of a book and didn't want to give them to us, but now we had closure.

What was your time on Masterchef like?

Stressful, very stressful. It was hugely challenging and it wasn't something I was prepared for. I didn't think it would be as stressful as it was, so it just goes to show everyone has their comfort zones. For me, my comfort zone is sitting in a bobsleigh and crashing and doing all that, dusting yourself off and going again, that's my comfort zone, which is alien to some people, who look at me and say: "You're mad!" but public speaking is very difficult for me, I get nervous and it gets my heart beating more than on the bob track.

Cooking in front of millions of people on TV, now that's nerve wracking! My girlfriend entered me, and at the time we were doing work on our house so didn't have a kitchen and I had to cook my audition on a camping stove in the garden. I hadn't cooked for six months so I felt really out of practice. Very overwhelmed. But at the same time an amazing experience.

Where there any skills you transferred from bobsleighing to cooking?

I wouldn't say there was anything directly, but I do believe they go very much hand in hand. I think of cooking as a balance between art and science. For those of you who like cooking, it's the same as chemistry. It's the same as a method, you add a bit of this and a bit of that. In chemistry it is very precise, and the same goes for some cooking like baking, you have got to get it right. And then there's the other side, the artistic side, if you ask ten different people how they make a bolognaise you will get ten different recipes … and they all taste good! The fact that it can be broken down to those two elements is very cool. Bobsleighing is all science; you have to do this, and you have to do that, and it should work.

An Olympian Visits

How do you deal with the stress?

We work with Steve Peters who wrote a book called the “Chimp Paradox”. It’s a brilliant book, and it was so successful because it is so relatable. Sports psychology is a science in itself, it’s not very easy to come by, especially if trying to teach methods for coping. Steve Peters broke the brain down into three parts: the “human brain” which is what makes you, you; your personality and your “computer” which takes control of all your things you don’t think about like your breathing or fiddling with a pen, and that’s the position we want to operate in when it comes to competition.

The computer brains are reliable, more reliable than a real computer that operates at 100% success rate. If you are in the computer zone you know what it is like, you practice something over and over again, everything is automatic, you do it without thinking.

The third part is the “chimp brain”, the gremlin, the basic neanderthal part of your brain. It throws in a “what if?” that takes you out of your computer mode, and the chimp takes over and you can’t do it. So that’s what we worked on for a full year leading up to the games, we were computers, and it takes the pressure off. You are operating in this very controlled, reliable way, and that showed in the Olympics. At the start we were only 200th of a second and 500th of a second different on the run, which is really consistent. We owed that to the sports psychology.

How can “normal people” getting into that mode?

We say the chimp gets out of the box when he is running loose and interfering with what you need to do. This model is not just for sports, it’s for anything that relies on you to be at peak performance mentally. Exams are a great one; my tactic for exams would be self-talk, a way to get your chimp back in its box is to self-talk, tell yourself you are prepared and ready for this. So in exams I would say: “You are ready for this, this is what you have prepared for” and I did that in sport as well.

I used to get very nervous before a 400m race, and about an hour before I would be my most nervous. As the time came closer I would get more and more calm as I would just say to myself: “This is what you have trained for,” and in bobsleighing I would say the same, with the added elements of nerves, I would say to myself: “Where would you rather be?” and that was hugely powerful to me, because when you are staring down the 20 corners of a really fast track, where would I rather be? Here, or sat in an office? That was my little trigger which brought me back down to ground, the same tactic I used for exams I used for sports, and it worked.

What was the favourite thing you made on Masterchef?

By a long way, the chicken curry. In Wales, it’s common to have curry, rice and chips. Half-and-half as they call it. I love cooking curries; they are great because you can eat it at every level. You can buy a jar and just pour it in, or cook from scratch, at whatever level you want. I love cooking curries so that’s what I had as my signature dish. I had little fried potatoes as the chips, and I did a pilau rice. It was my favourite, and theirs as well – but sadly they didn’t like anything else!

What was the hardest thing you had to make for the show?

The dish I went out on which was fish tacos. I did surf-and-turf tacos and I was trying to be too clever; I gave myself too much to do in the time frame. I couldn’t make it look pretty either, which is what Masterchef is all about. I am a very rustic cook, I cook for my appetite ... which is big. I kept saying to myself: “Don’t overload the plate” as they are always criticising that on Masterchef. They want pretty little dainty plates. I gave myself too much to do, I thought I hit the brief really well, but I gave myself too much to do and I was flustered. I wasn’t happy with it, so I wasn’t surprised I left after that.

What was the most enjoyable dish to make?

The one in the middle, venison with triple cooked chips! For the chicken dish in round one I had to provide the ingredients, then after that they provide them. So I went: “I’ll get the most expensive stuff I can get!” and they provided me with the whole fillet, hundreds of pounds worth of meat! They have a home economist to help you set up and make sure you have every implement you need. It’s like a warehouse full of kitchen stuff. I asked them what happens, and they all eat it afterwards, so I know that the remainder was going to be cooked up by the staff for a well-deserved supper and they were enjoying the fact I chose really expensive stuff as well!

An Olympian Visits

What about behaviour expectations of Olympians?

This is hugely correlated with the sort of attitude someone has. You will be a role model, so there are expectations for you to behave in a courteous manner at all times. Whatever you do, particularly in the sport, you are there to showcase your sport if you leave or retire afterwards.

Not everyone fits the same bill, when I left bobsleighing, I got a job in sales. There is an expectation that if you are a bobsleighing Olympian you will be outgoing, you are this person who can do sales and chat to people and be persuasive. That certainly isn't me. I wasn't very good at it at all. There was an expectation that, "You must be this, this and this," but I was actually, "This, this and this," … so that job didn't last very long.

Who will you support in the football European Championships?

I like to call myself a "Home Nations" supporter, unlike many Welsh and Scottish people I know who support anyone who is against England. I support Wales first usually in football (but let's be honest Wales will go out), and then I will continue to support England, and the same goes for anything else.

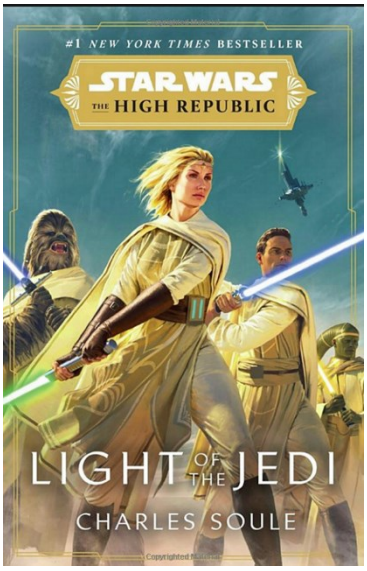
Where I am a little bit more passionate will be in rugby, for obvious reasons, as it's a sport that Wales are more competitive in shall we say. I love the Six Nations tournament, and every year when that comes round it's just the best thing to watch for me, so I am very passionately Welsh then, but again, if it came to a rugby World Cup I would do exactly the same, support Wales and then any of the home nations. I would even go as far as saying I would support France versus any southern hemisphere country. Anyone who is proximal to me I would support.

Interview by Milly Cross 9W, Kai Kenway, 9P and Ruth Sloper 9P

Head Boy, Felipe Brown and Head Girl, Rosie Donaldson
with Olympian Bruce Tasker

Book Review

Light of the Jedi by Charles Soule



Light of the Jedi is a Star Wars novel. Star Wars is a fictional universe, originally conceived by the film director George Lucas and introduced to the public through a trilogy of blockbuster films between 1977 and 1983. The original story has been expanded significantly since the original films through a further eight films, a number of TV series and several books.

Star Wars is set in a fictional galaxy and revolves around a set of exotic characters, the lives they lead and the fundamental battle between good and evil, represented by the light and dark sides of "The Force", a fundamental force that binds all matter together and that can be controlled by certain characters.

This book is set in the High Republic era 200 years before the film Star Wars: The Phantom Menace. Light of the Jedi is one of three books set in this era, but it is Light of the Jedi that introduces it. The book focuses on several characters both Jedi and non-force sensitive, and shows their responses to a major problem that threatens the lives of billions of people under the orders of the Galactic Senate and Jedi Order, and later the growing threat of the criminal organisation known as the Nihil, in the outer Rim of the galaxy.

It is an extremely exciting book that I find handles the creation of an antagonist well without the Sith being involved, as they are still in hiding at this point, and I liked the diversity of characters, especially amongst the Jedi, with not only human Jedi as main characters, but wookie, trandoshian and twi'lek Jedi as well.

I was also glad to see the mention of Yoda, who is still a member of the Jedi Order at this time along with the appearances of two of the other older, but more minor characters of the Star Wars prequels, Jedi masters Yarael Poof and Oppo Rancisis, who are seen on the Jedi Council 200 years later, alongside Yoda and the 9 other council members during the Phantom Menace, but die before the start of the clone wars 10 years after that.

The book is then left on a cliff hanger with the capture of Jedi master Loden Greatstorm, and the events of this book will be continued in 'The Rising Storm' which will be released on June 29th 2021.

By Charlie Irving-Bell 9W

Mr Barton: The Man, The Myth … The Legend!

When we heard that Mr Barton was leaving Beaminster we decided to ask him a few questions about his teaching life and what he planned on doing for the future.

Mr Barton has been a teacher for nearly 35 years, spending fifteen of those years at Beaminster. His tip for all students was to make sure we enjoy our education, to try and enjoy it and to get the most out of it.

He learnt that having a good sense of humour was useful for teaching and something he picked up throughout years. His best bit of advice for whoever takes up his job is that they must really be passionate about Design and Technology, and try to pass that passion on to the students. Trying to use the new technology, like the 3D printer, in the lessons is also something he would suggest.

He wished that every Tech teacher knew the answers to the exam questions! When asked about the funniest thing a student had told him, he explained he had had a couple of the classic, "Dog ate my homework" or "The cat was sick on it" and then told a little story about a student who asked him if a stick of metal was okay? The student was holding the metal with tongs, but Sir didn't realise this until he'd already grabbed it … and ended up burning his fingers!

Over the years, Sir has heard many homework excuses but he said the best one was when a student told him their grandma had used the sheet to put on the bottom of the budgie's cage.

Sir spent a year doing graphics and animation and then thought he wanted to have a go at teaching. He said the best thing about being a teacher was being involved with young people and seeing our faces when we finish a project. The worst bit was writing reports, and he also didn't really like disciplining children either.

His top teaching tips were not to take work home with you, you should always have time with your family … and some time for yourself. Sir is hoping to enjoy his retirement and might be setting up a workshop so he can still make things.

By Ruth Sloper 9P and Kai Kenway 9P

Ambition • Service • Kindness

Diana Award

We are absolutely delighted, and immensely proud to learn that former Beaminster School Deputy Head Girl, Lerryn Eveleigh, has received the Diana Award!

This award, given in honour of Princess Diana's view that young people can change the world, is the highest accolade a young person can achieve for social or humanitarian works, and fully reflects our school's core values of Ambition, Service and Kindness.

Huge congratulations to Lerryn on her prestigious award and for being such a fantastic role model and ambassador for our school, we can't wait to see what she does in the future!

To find out more about why Lerryn received her well deserved award visit:

https://diana-award.org.uk/roll-of-honour-2021/

Sports Day and Final House Point Results

The sun shone, the sky was blue and there wasn't a cloud in the sky for this year's Sports Day, which was a real pleasure to be able to hold again following the necessity for last year's "virtual" events.

Despite some distance track events being cancelled due to an Amber weather alert in place for the heat, competition was fierce and sporting, with new school records set despite the challenging conditions. Congratulations to:

Year 7			Year 8			Year 10		
Eva Wagstaff	300m	54.40s	Eva Murless	300m	50.71s	Gracie Kingston	100m	13.16s
Owen Kemp	300m	49.27s	Lewis King	300m	43.62s			

Other performances of note, and just missing out on a record:

Year 7			Year 9		
Imogen Beale	Triple Jump	7.88m (12cm off the record)	Kitty Rumens	Javelin	22.87 (1cm off the record)
Owen Kemp	Long Jump	4.65m (10cm off the record)	Alex Marsh	Long Jump	5.18m (2cm off)
Oli Strong	Long Jump	4.65m (10cm off the record)			

Mr Wagstaff and the PE team organised a great afternoon of events, and Mr Smith provided a suitably energetic soundtrack and commentary for the afternoon.

The results for Sports Day are shown below, along with the final results for all the House Competitions across the year, so many congratulations to Pilsdon for taking the overall crown this year.

Sports Day Results
Lewesdon 743
Pilsdon 732
Eggardon 675
Waddon 665
Mapperton 603

Final Overall Standings
Pilsdon 244
Lewesdon 212
Eggardon 201
Mapperton 192
Waddon 189

Lockdown 3.0

Year 9 student and Newshound stalwart, Kai Kenway, gives a personal view on the last lockdown, being in school, working from home and returning to school

Home Learning

During the lockdown I went into school every day as the child of a key worker, and it couldn't have been more different.

Instead of children piling out into the courtyard when the bell went, there were cars parked there, and only a few of us rushing to the tennis courts to get a good game in during break.

The main difference I saw was the amount of seagulls that were about - we had barely any once they had figured out there weren't many children in whose food they could nick! The school didn't feel as empty as it probably was because there was nearly always someone scurrying along the corridors doing a small task to get out of a bit of a lesson.

Lessons did feel a little different, but the main advantage we had was the school's usually dependable connection, and the TA's available to help us. I was up in CO1 and we had around 14 students up there, with only 44 in the whole school on the busiest day, a bit different to the 8 in total on the first day!

Every day but Monday we had Mrs Dungate supervising us, and I think it's safe to say she learnt as much as us, having to help us with all our different subjects. She could be doing History one minute, then helping someone else out with Maths the next. We all thoroughly enjoyed being up there and we had a lot of fun with Mrs Dungate, throwing our own little party on the last day with cupcakes and chocolates.

Despite all this it is nice to be back in school with normal lessons, normal people and a normal routine. Thank you to all the staff who were helping us out and to all the teachers for providing the lessons.

Back to School, Again

While at first the idea of returning to school again may have seemed daunting, and the twice weekly Covid tests monstrous, the routine will soon kick in and all shall be fairly normal anytime soon.

As usual when we return to school, we thought it would be nice to gather ideas on how everyone was feeling about their return, how they found this lockdown, and most importantly, how well they thought the school was protecting us.

We found that most students felt the school was doing everything in their power to keep us safe, feeling that the masks, while a discomfort, were a necessity and that the weekly Covid tests were just something we all had to do to get by.

Many pupils were a little worried about returning and having to socialise properly again but have found that it is not bad at all. Many found the lockdown lessons much better than the last time, having more structure and routine to the day.

They also thought that the Teams' meetings at the beginning and end were useful, along with feedback given on ClassCharts. Most were excited to be able to go back and do their favourite lessons again or just to be able to get out of the house for the day was a blessing for many.

If you are still worried about school then your tutor and head of year are always ready to help and listen.

By Kai Kenway 9P

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's award, or DofE for short, is an award for people age 14 and older. You do Bronze when you are 14, Silver the next year then Gold when you are 16. Bronze takes six months to complete and Silver 12 (for those who have previously done Bronze). For Gold, you need to do your programme for at least 12 months if you've achieved your Silver Award, or 18 months if you've started at Gold level without doing your Silver – even if you've done Bronze. The big difference at Gold is you'll also do a Residential section – staying away from home for five days and four nights doing a shared activity with people you don't know.

So why do it …?
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is widely recognised by employers and education providers as the definitive qualification for demonstrating self-reliance, commitment, and dedication. It is also a great thing to do and very fun!

My DofE experience
This year, DofE was a little different due to Covid-19. We could not sleep out in our tents and the deadlines for doing the expedition were changed a bit. Usually, you must have completed at least one section to do the expedition, this year you must have started all the sections.

You have three activities to complete, volunteering, physical and skills. You must do one for 6 months and the other for 3 months. Once they are completed you have to go on an expedition. For my physical I chose cycling, for volunteering I am making crisp packet blankets for homeless people, and for my skill I chose the school Newspaper. I have completed all apart from my volunteering which will be finished very soon.

Before the expedition you must do some training in first aid and map reading. The first aid training was great fun, and we also get two qualifications that last for three years and one for one year. The Automated External Defibrillator training is valid for one year, and the Adrenaline Auto Injection Module and Outdoor First Aid Module are valid for three.

The expedition was great fun, the most fun part of the whole award, when you spend two days and one night out walking and camping. The first day was very fun, we were high spirited and enjoying the views and lovely weather. We must carry all the equipment we need and our bags each weighed 15kg(!), and even though we weren't actually camping, when we reached Drimpton we put our tents up and cooked dinner on a Trangia.

The second day was harder as it was a very wet day and we were lower on morale, and we were all very glad we had our waterproofs! Some of you may have spotted us walking or coming up through Beaminster into school. You also need an aim for the expedition, ours was to photograph the natural wildlife, and then you must do a presentation afterwards showcasing your aim.

All in all, it was a great experience and something good to put on your CV. I suggest it to anyone who thinks they have the commitment to do it as it's an amazing experience.

By Kai Kenway 9P

Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award

My Duke of Edinburgh Experience

I started my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze in September 2020. We are required to spend up to six months in each of the following sections: volunteering at a local non-profit organisation, starting or continuing to learn a skill, and a physical activity.

For the skills section, I started to learn to play the guitar. I have really enjoyed challenging myself and it gave me something to do in the lockdowns! I am going to continue with lessons after I have completed the award.

Just before signing up for the Duke of Edinburgh award I had just joined the Beaminster Under 14s football team, so I decided to do this for my physical activity. I really enjoyed the training every Friday night and we played matches on Sundays. I have become fitter as a result and loved being part of a team with my friends.

For my volunteering section I completed beach cleans. It was something that I was still able to complete in the lockdowns as well as getting lots of fresh air and exercise. I enjoyed helping the environment and making a small contribution to making the beach more pleasant for everyone.

My favourite part of the award was the expedition.

It was so good after lockdown to do something different and be outside with a group of friends. It was very memorable walking in all weathers and getting lost and having to navigate our way back!

Completing the award felt like a big achievement and was worth it, even though it requires a lot of effort, time and dedication. It's a great feeling when you finally get to take off your walking boots and realise you've done it!

By Charles Irving-Bell 9W

Help and Kindness Interview

A thought-provoking essay by Year 9 Newshound Ruth Sloper

What is Help and Kindness?

Help and Kindness is a network that brings together people who need help with people who can offer help. It gathers information about all sorts of services, groups, activities and people that run things, charities, businesses, etc. It's really local, so everywhere has a pin on the map.

It can be used by people to find out what's nearby, but it also is highly comprehensive, so a user can go from finding out about mental health-related services to services that help with managing taxes or debt. It's all about joining the dots between people and organisations.

The Beginning

For years before the start of Help and Kindness, Jon, Nic and Ralph had been making free websites for charities and working with community groups. The initial idea came from an AGM that they were invited to, where hundreds of community groups were represented. They were discussing their futures, due to a change in the council, where it would be changing from lots of small, local authorities to two across the whole county.

For many, this put their organisation in jeopardy as some received money from the council, whilst others had referrals from their local council, and all the people they had previously worked with in the council were changing roles, or even losing their jobs all together.

To the team, these people seemed really scared and really vulnerable to this huge change. The other thing that was happening in the room was networking, spreading the word about their own charity or organisation and raising awareness for specific issues.

At one point in the conversation, a food bank from East Dorset said that they had run out of food the previous weekend. A food bank from West Dorset told them that they should have phoned, so that the West Dorset food bank could have helped them out, but the East Dorset food bank didn't even know the West Dorset food bank existed until the meeting!

After the meeting, the idea was born, to have a place where these people could find out about each other, where information wasn't lost when change happened, and where relationships between organisations could be nurtured and made more resilient.

They decided that they would see if there was something they could do … and there was.

The first part was a website that worked as a directory for all the different organisations. The second part was finding out what people needed, so they spent 18 months asking people what would be useful as a part of this website. In November 2019, Help and Kindness was launched. Since then, they've built a website that works as a database of services, but they've also built fantastic connections all around the county.

It has allowed organisations a greater awareness of each other and creates joins between different types of services. Recently, a message board was added to the Help and Kindness website, specifically for food banks. That alone has made a huge difference as it allows food banks to post when they've run out of supplies, and from that, other food banks can help them out, ensuring that no one has to go without.

The Development

There are two things, essentially, that Help and Kindness do. The first is networking and the second is building bits onto the website. One of the areas that they would like to add to is having more staff on the ground to be present at meetings, as these are the places where amazing things happen. It would allow Help and Kindness to better understand the problems and challenges faced by these organisations, as well as being able to be involved further with their projects and initiatives.

The other thing that the funding would be used for is website development, such as message board forums, communication networks and other ways to use information, such as dashboards, which is a view of information specific to the user. Having extra funding would mean an ability to work on the coding for projects.

Spreading the word: language and story-telling

Covid has shown us that there's no 'them' and 'us'… we're all part of our communities and we all have the ability to be both recipients and givers of support, in different parts of our lives. Recently, the politics of language has been prevalent, which is about not being binary in that view. If you talk about people as 'vulnerable' or 'in need', you strip them of their power, so the language of autonomy is far better; it allows the individual to be in control.

We all have to pull together to help each other because each one of us has the capacity to make a change, and to help someone else. In the same way, everyone needs help sometimes, no matter who they are or what they do.

As human beings, we pull together naturally. Help and Kindness contributes by making people aware of help that they might not have initially known about, as well as bringing the organisations together. One of their biggest activities in raising awareness is story telling, not exactly the 'once upon a time' kind, but asking 'Did you know ...?' or 'Have you met ...?'. It's done in a way that makes people realise that it could be them, or someone they know, or that they can

Help and Kindness Interview

help in a number of unexpected ways. It's done on social media, in person, in meetings; wherever possible, stories are told. It brings people together in a non-threatening and inclusive way, and then people can tell stories to improve awareness and the ability to connect.

This empowers people, giving them confidence to talk about taboo and stigmatised subjects and normalise said subjects. It takes away fear of rejection, or a feeling of being out of your depth, and allows inclusivity.

The Circle of Inspiration

Inspiration comes from everyone, family, friends and spending time with people who do good things. It rubs off and builds up what both of you can do. When you listen and engage, you find your way to other people who do similarly amazing and inspiring things. It gives you confidence to talk about it, to tell your stories and then listen in return. From that, a greater awareness comes, but also change and action as you share contacts, resources and determination. It becomes a circle of inspiration, which can be found through listening to and engaging with anyone and everyone.

Involvement and Opportunities

The first part of getting involved in change is to listen.

There's always something that will catch your attention, or move you to action. The more you listen, the more you can find possible points of action and engagement in what you're interested in. That might not be what people tell you you can do, but what you find in yourself that you want to do. There are loads of fantastic projects running in Dorset, and they don't all require adults to volunteer and help out.

For example, there's a mental health organisation aimed at teenagers being run by teenagers with lived experience of mental health issues. They have been given a forum to share their understanding and coping mechanisms with other teenagers in the county, as well as running things like workshops in schools. There's effectively no difference between their services and those of an adult run service, which is proof that age doesn't stop action.

A lot of boundaries that people might feel are there when it comes to action are more permeable than you might think, such as age or time or travel. Even looking up an issue you're interested in can be a good start, because you might find a local group for it, or a national project looking for people like you. Part of the excitement is that all of the opportunities are there, it's just choosing what you're interested in that needs doing.

Individual Change and Coping with the Negatives

Talking to people with a similar view or experience as you is good. A lot of stuff that happens humans aren't really designed to cope with, so doing so is tough. All these things, that can make you feel angry or sad or helpless, you have to work out to make a change. From your family, to friends, to community, it's in the smallest of ways that the big changes start, because taking on the government single-handedly is never going to work. It's all about being the change you want to see.

Everyone has the ability to connect with people and to make them feel heard, so that no one has to try and deal with massive things alone. It's the biggest kind of influence you can achieve for preventing damaging things in society.

If you're not frightened by people and their judgements, you're unlikely to be hostile towards them and judge them unfairly. You build up a sense of your own truth and security, which protects you against extremism and doubt, and it comes from being together, talking, listening and being open eyed to the positive things going on. Finding a community that you can look at the positives, but also work through the negatives with is vital to being able to deal with things in a healthy way.

There's always growth in action, and people are constantly creating and facilitating new projects and organisations. Help and Kindness puts people with ideas in touch with groups and people to help them with their projects.

By Ruth Sloper 9P

For more information, please visit the Help and Kindess website:

weymouth | support in Dorset | Help and Kindness listings for 'weymouth' in Dorset

Beaminster School Term Dates 2021-2022

Autumn Term 2021

2021	September					October					November					December				
Week		A1	B1	A2	B2	B2	A3	B3	A4		B4	A5	B5	A6	B6	B6	A7	B7		
Mon		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27
Tues		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28
Weds	1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29
Thurs	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30
Fri	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31

Spring Term 2022

2022	January					February					March					April				
Week	A8	B8	A9	B9	A10	A10	B10	A11		B11	B11	A12	B12	A13	B13	B13	A14			B14
Mon	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tues	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Weds	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thurs	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Fri	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29

Summer Term 2022

2022	May					June					July					August				
Week	A15	B15	A16	B16			A17	B17	A18	B18	B18	A19	B19	A20						
Mon	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
Tues	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30
Weds	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31
Thurs	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	
Fri	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	

= Non pupil days = School Holidays = Bank Holidays = Academic Monitoring Day

= Staggered start, only identified Year groups in school (see Term Dates list for details)

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL
TERM DATES FOR 2021-2022

Ambition · Service · Kindness

AUTUMN TERM 2021

(NB: May be subject to change due to prevailing Government guidance)

Thursday 2nd September	Staff Training Day #1 (no students in)
Friday 3rd September	Staff Training Day #2 (no students in)
Monday 6th September	Year 7 Students in **ONLY** (Week **A**)
Tuesday 7th September	All Year Groups back in school (Week **A**)
Friday 22nd October	Staff Training Day #3 (no students in)
Monday 25th Oct – Friday 29th Oct	Half Term (return Mon 1st November, Week **B**)
Friday 19th November	Academic Monitoring Day
Friday 17th December	End of Autumn Term

Christmas Holidays (Mon Dec 20th 2021 – Mon 3rd Jan 2022)

SPRING TERM 2022

Tuesday 4th January	Staff Training Day #4 (no students in)
Wednesday 5th January	Start of Spring Term for students (Week **A**)
Monday 21st – Friday 25th February	Half Term (return Mon 28th Feb, Week **B**)
Friday 8th April	End of Spring Term

Easter Holidays (Mon 11th April 2022 – Fri 22nd April 2022)

SUMMER TERM 2022

Monday 25th April	Start of Summer Term (Week **B**)
Monday 2nd May	Bank Holiday
Monday 30th May – Friday 3rd June	Half Term (return Mon 6th June, Week **A)**
Friday 1st July	Staff Training Day #5 (no students in)
Monday 18th July	Start of Activities Week (Compulsory for all students in Years 7-10)
Friday 22nd July	End of Summer Term

Key Dates

AUTUMN TERM 2021		SPRING TERM 2022	
September 2021		**January 2022**	
Monday 6th Jan	Year 7 students in ONLY	Monday 3rd Jan	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 7th Jan	**Start of Autumn Term (Week A)**	Tuesday 4th Jan	Staff Training Day (no students in)
Friday 22nd October	Staff Training Day (no students in)	**Weds 5th Jan**	**Start of Spring Term (Week A)**
HALF TERM	**Mon 25th - Fri 29th October**	**HALF TERM**	**Mon 21st to Fri 25th Feb**
Friday 19th November	Academic Monitoring Day	Fri 8th April	End of Term
Friday 17th December	End of Term		

Our Wonderful Newshounds

These are our talented Newshounds who have created this newspaper.
We'd love to recruit more Newshounds to the team,
so if any students would like to join us, just contact one of the existing team,
or speak to Ms Forster or Mrs Chalkley in the office, all welcome!

We really hope you have enjoyed reading this edition of the Beaminster Times

Contact email: NChalkley@beaminster.dorset.sch.uk or call 01308 862633 if there is anything in particular that you would like the newspaper to cover in future.

For more information about us use the QR code to visit the school website: www.beaminster.dorset.sch.uk