

# BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Ambition • Service • Kindness

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28<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to the second half-term of 2025 and the season of Lent. With the days lengthening and the Spring Equinox arriving in three weeks, I think we are all looking forward to some more daylight and, maybe, a little more sun!

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete our 15<sup>th</sup> **Kirkland Rowell parent satisfaction survey** in the summer of 2024. With a response rate well above the national average, we have been reviewing the enormous amount of information with Governors over the past term and I am delighted to be able to share the key findings with you.

You gave the school a **Very Good** rating for its overall performance, with every category as Good or better. Nearly 1/3 of you felt the school had improved in the last two years, and over ¼ of all new parents reported that the school was better than expected. Encouragingly, an outstanding 91% of you were happy to recommend the school to other parents. Please do see the attached for further information.

Both the **6<sup>th</sup> Form New York** and **Saalbach Ski** trips were great successes over the half-term. My thanks, again, to all the staff for offering these incredible opportunities, and to the students for making them such fun!

Our Year 11 **GCSE Food students** have been put through their paces this week as they prepared their final three course meals under timed conditions. Having had the privilege of taste testing the smorgasbord of sumptuous courses, I can only say how impressive the plate to palate presentation, planning and preparation has been; congratulations to them all. Year 11 also have a busy few weeks ahead with **mock speaking examinations in French**, and then the final set of trial examinations beginning on Monday 10th March.

Two A-Level students, Lily Papworth and Finn Brooks, were able to join Mrs Rychnovsky to view **Wessex Water's laboratories** in Saltford, Bath, where both drinking water and treated sewage effluent testing is done. The students saw scientists processing samples, including growing bacteria on Petri dishes, and using gas chromatography and mass spectrometry as part of the water quality testing and contamination. The trip was organised by CRoWD (<https://www.dorsetcrowd.com/>), a group which is using citizen science to monitor and improve the water quality of the rivers in West Dorset. CRoWD works closely with Wessex Water, the Environment Agency, Dorset National Landscapes, Dorset Council, other local councils and volunteers.

We very much appreciated seeing so many of you for the **Year 10 Consultation Evening** on Wednesday. As always, please do contact your child's Tutor if you need any support or wish to follow anything up.

Looking ahead, Monday sees the first day of our next half-termly **Reading Week**, with staff reading the novel '**Rooftoppers**'. The story is set in the Victorian era about a girl called Sophie who was found floating in an empty cello case after a shipwreck. Sophie is convinced that her mother is still alive, with her search taking her to the rooftops of Paris ...

After a year of planning, research and development, our **Year 10 F1 team** are taking their computer-designed, aerodynamic and 3D printed models up to Bath University on Friday for the SW Regional finals. Mrs Da Costa and the team have been working incredibly hard on this demanding project, so our best wishes go to Hardy Lancaster, Seth Rand, Charlie Vickery and Marley Sims.

The Beaminster Area Eco Group have another interesting talk on **Quarries to Nature Reserves**, by Andy Littler, telling the fascinating story of how restoration in quarries is encouraging the return of a wide range of wildlife. The talk is on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 7 for 7.30pm start in The Pavilion, Memorial Playing Fields, Beaminster; entry is free but donations are welcome and refreshments are available. The **Netherbury Nature Group** also have a photographic celebration of "The Natural Beauty of Dorset" on March 21<sup>st</sup>, information about both events is attached.

This week's cyber safety information sheet, what parents need to know about shopping platforms, is attached

Finally, don't forget to look out for the very rare planetary parade tonight, just after sunset, when seven planets will be aligned, and which will not be seen again until 2040!

Mr Hales

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