



The Dixie Grammar School

Nursery • Junior • Senior

Contents:

1. Mr Lynn
2. Mrs Billington
3. Mrs Billington/
Mrs Banton
4. Mrs Banton
DOSE challenge
5. Mr Kirk, Opera-
tions Manager
- 6/7. Salvation Army
Christmas appeal
Photographic
Competition
- 8/9. Musical Theatre
& Creative Arts
Showcase



Albert receiving his ISA Limitless Skills award. The second series of challenges can be [found here](#). Mr Fielding will provide edible prizes for those taking part and he will be tracking year group and school lead-boards

At the end of what seems to have been the longest five-week half term on record, this welcome break gives us all a chance to spend time away from screens and relax. I am encouraged to read plans for the return of all students to school from 8 March and plans are already in place to ensure as safe a return as possible. In addition to arrangements last term, staff have been tested twice a week since January and this will be rolled out to include all Senior students on a weekly basis going forwards. Parental consent was collected from the vast majority over the Christmas break — for those new to the Dixie in January, [the form is available here](#).

We should be careful not to be influenced by media headlines: this generation of pupils isn't 'doomed': far from it— and for the vast majority at the Dixie there has been no lost school time. Our full day of live lessons from ages 4-18 and familiar routines including the wearing of uniform, have ensured academic progress has been largely unaffected by remote learning. Gracie Brooks, Upper Sixth student 2019/20, has brilliantly captured our remote provision in two short videos—one each reflecting teaching in the [Junior](#) and [Senior](#) sections of the Dixie. Students have shown resilience and adaptability—perhaps more than any school generation before them.

This half term has of course been a challenge for us all, and I have been thoroughly impressed by the fantastic response from pupils, grateful for the support from Governors and thrilled by the flexibility and ingenuity of teaching and support staff. We are hugely grateful to parents for supporting the remote learning from home, but also for the regular words of encouragement and positive feedback: these have had real impact and at difficult times have meant a great deal—thank you.

Earlier this term, we launched our Diversity calendar and Jon Dixon, Head of Sixth Form has written a [short blog](#) outlining our aims. The Diversity Calendar is Dixie's visible commitment to a welcoming and inclusive environment that celebrates diversity as strength.

One highlight of the half term for me was my meetings with groups of Year 5 pupils and Mrs Billington online last week. I asked them about their prized possessions, most proud moments, superhero superpowers and lockdown skills. From moon walking, crazy pet stories, Tony the pony, pausing time to enable the eating of sweets, Minecraft, to graffiti, art work, unicorns, stories of older siblings and invisibility, they were individually and collectively very impressive. We also gave a hint at some of our plans for our new Year 6 curriculum—Dixie 6. More information will be shared with parents next half term, but Year 5 were excited to learn that Mrs Billington will teach



them for one afternoon a week next year. Confidence, articulation and enthusiasm were much in evidence and they made me realise what I am missing most with remote education—time for informal conversation with pupils and celebration of the random enthusiasms and diverse talents of Dixie students. We know that this is what students are missing most too—informal time in each others' company. We look forward to providing exactly this as we return to a form of normality next half term.

Richard Lynn



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Nursery • Junior • Senior

Mrs Billington

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News @ The Dixie February 2021

Dear Parents

I just want to say a huge thank you for your support this term. Supporting your children at home to continue their remote learning, juggling other family and work pressures, and your unwavering support to us all has been hugely appreciated.

I am amazed at the achievements of all children this term. The majority of the time, lessons are attended by 100% of the class and if not attended live then the work and engagement is still there. The standards have in no way dipped or declined and I am sure that when the children return they will be in no way academically disadvantaged. Of course what they are missing is the interactive play, playground chats and spontaneous laughter of being altogether and we really hope that we have them all back in school very soon. When they do return we will be focusing on allowing them time to be together again. For all of them they will need to adjust to life back in the classroom, back as part of a group and back with their friends. We will be supporting them to re-engage and connect again and to get used to the hubbub of learning of the classroom.

Class Dojo has proved an invaluable tool to share tasks and work on and also to see what is happening across the whole school. English, Maths, Topic, Science, Music, Mandarin, Positive Education, French and more have all continued across the school. I have particularly enjoyed seeing the outcomes of Science and cookery lessons in different year groups! Thank you for supporting and enabling these lessons to all take place.

Pippins, has of course remained open throughout lockdown and I am so pleased that our very youngest have continued to be able to access their learning and play at such a crucial development time for them. They particularly enjoyed the snow and have continued to develop their skills ready for starting school in September.

I hope you all have a lovely half term and a break from remote learning at home. I shared some online safety information in my previous letter and have taken the opportunity to share more links below. Please do take the time to read and consider with the inevitable increased screen time our children have at the moment.

Kind regards

Emma Billington





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Mrs Billington

Mrs Banton, Lead DSL

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Sharing pictures

Using devices like phones and tablets to share pictures and videos can be a great way for children to have fun and stay in touch with friends and family. It's really important



your child knows what is ok to share online and what they should check with you first.

Read younger children [sharing pictures or videos online](#) for more information on the risks and how to support safer sharing.

Watching videos

Children love to watch videos and YouTube is always a firm favourite! But sometimes children can be exposed to videos that are not meant for them. [YouTube Kids](#) is a safer way for children to explore their interests. You can find more information about this on [YouTube: what parents need to know](#). Remember, primary-age children should be supervised at all times when online.

Online etiquette

During the first national lockdown, we worked hard with our Senior students to ensure that they understood the importance of email etiquette – we asked them to think carefully about how they write an email and shared our expectations of polite online communication, including Google Classroom comments. I am delighted that the vast majority of our students are engaging thoughtfully in communication with Form tutors and teachers this academic year: this is a very useful and important life skill.

This term we would like to turn our focus to **online etiquette**. Body language, voice, tone and feedback, all traditional features of the classroom, can be interpreted very differently during remote learning. Online etiquette, sometimes known as '**netiquette**', helps us to interact with others in a considerate and respectful way and contributes to positive wellbeing.

Here are a few key tips:

Respect others – it is really important to respect the feelings and opinions of others even if they differ from your own. Being in an online classroom where you do not see others 'in person' can take away some of the formality of school. But remember that it is good online etiquette to exercise the same level of care and even the same 'please' and 'thank you' that you would use in real life situations.

Set the tone – using the chat function in Google Classroom is a great way to share ideas with others and to ask questions during the lesson. Avoid using the chat function to message friends, distract others or ask irrelevant questions. Remember that typing in all-caps is considered 'shouting' online – in a classroom situation, you would not, of course, shout out across the room!



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Independence – if you are confused or struggling, attempt to work things out for yourself first. If after a little effort you still need help, do ask your teacher!

Cameras - we continue to encourage all our students to participate in live lessons with their cameras switched on. It is not only easier for teachers to connect with students and gauge understanding but it also contributes to a wider sense of well-being during remote learning, especially for those who are feeling isolated or lonely. Please do get in touch with us if technology or individual personal circumstances prevent this.

Mobile phones – whilst using a mobile phone in the classroom does not negatively affect your learning, for example if you are using it for research purposes or to access your online dictionary, it can be a distractor in online lessons. Some students are reporting to us that peers are calling or messaging them during lessons and this prevents them from concentrating and learning effectively. Think carefully about the impact you have on others – you can message or FaceTime at break and lunchtime and see each other during your Form time Google Meet.

Attendance and punctuality – Attending school regularly and being punctual is just as important during lockdown as it is when we are physically in school. Excellent attendance means that you are not missing out academically, pastorally or socially and you can take full advantage of the support and opportunities on offer. Punctuality is an important part of self-discipline and is essential to good time management and preparation for adult life. Being late to lessons can disturb others and could result in you missing key information. Make sure that you arrive on time and show respect to your teachers and peers – it is a good habit to keep for when we return to school.

Submitting work in the right way – during this period of remote learning, you are not handing work to your teacher in person so make sure that you know how to submit your work online. Ignoring your teachers' instructions is an example of 'poor netiquette'. Save yourself – and your teacher - extra work in the end by reading instructions carefully before you submit your class and homework.

Remember – positive online etiquette means behaving in a remote lesson with the same levels of respect, politeness and kindness that you would show in the classroom at school.

DOSE Camp-In Challenge

Over half term we would like to invite all students at the Junior School and Years 6-7 to participate in our DOSE Camp-In Challenge over the half term holiday. The challenge is to build an indoor shelter and to spend the night sleeping in it, encouraging students to think about the practicality of what they have built in terms of size, space and location. Their shelter can be built of anything – the only requirement is that it is sturdy enough to last the night, and big enough for them to comfortably sleep in! They can choose any night over the half term holiday to do the challenge. The challenge is optional, but if your child does choose to participate in the challenge, they should send a photo of themselves in their shelter to rhodess@dixie.org.uk or cormackc@dixie.org.uk.



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**Mr Kirk, Operations
Manager**

www.dixie.org.uk

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Dear Parents,

The current parental communication tool used by the school (ParentMail) is going to be replaced with a new system called Weduc. During half-term, the school will begin the process of moving users/parents over to the new system.

Users/Parents will receive an email inviting them to enrol to the new system, at which point any contact information can be updated or changed, so even if you receive the invite via a work email address or an email address you would prefer not to use, you have the option to change this at the point of enrolment. Full instructions will be provided as part of the invitation to enrol.

Prompt enrolment would be extremely helpful in assisting our IT team to deal with any enrolment issues during the half-term period. Once all parents are enrolled we will announce the changeover date to the new system: currently the plan is to switch over week commencing 8th March.

We hope this change to the Weduc system and Weduc App will have a positive impact on school communications, and allow us to enhance the school/parent experience. Weduc includes new features and enhancements to existing features— some of the features the school may choose to use once the core features are up and running include newsfeeds for specific groups, absence reporting and a two-way parent/school in-app communication.

The payments module will connect to our cashless catering system in the same way as ParentMail did previously, any balances will be displayed in the new app once the system goes live.

Below is some additional parent information about Weduc:

Download the app

Visit:
weduc.co.uk/mobile-app

Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play

Please note, you will need to register before you can use the app. Speak to your school to get your enrolment details.

- Dashboard**
See a snapshot of upcoming events, important notices, unread messages and much more...
- Newsfeed**
Your very own social media-style community that allows you to see information and photos from within school.
- Calendar**
View the schools calendar and how it affects you and your child.
- Parent Portal**
View all information on your child's attendance and behaviour in school, report absences in advance without needing to call, access to your child's timetable and instant messaging to teachers.
- Notices**
See all the schools important updates separate for quick and easy reminders.
- Forms**
No more paper forms, quizzes and surveys. Simply fill out online and rest assured that the school has your response instantly.
- Digital Library**
View files shared with you by the school and it's teachers.
- The Hub**
One Login, One Location. Easily view all other systems the school uses and helpful links from one place.



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Salvation Army

Photographic competition

Christmas Gifts for the Salvation Army

Your support for the Christmas collection this year was very much appreciated by Mrs Scott, and I was delighted to receive a letter of thanks from the Hinckley Salvation Army:

“ I suppose it was inevitable in the present climate that the amount of people who were pleased to receive help was greater than ever this year. What joy was ours to see the faces of parents as they came to choose gifts for their children, to know therefore the difference that we were able to make for so many. Each person within your school who donated has played a part in that and I ask you pass on my gratitude on behalf of The Salvation Army in Hinckley, but also on behalf of those who received such beautiful gifts.”

The Dixie response was greater than ever this year—again: thank you all!

Senior Photographic Competition 2020

Mrs Mcgranaghan, Head of Art, has been overwhelmed by the standard and volume of entries this year. Congratulations to all of the pupils who have participated. It has been a really difficult decision to choose between many of the entries. Staff from across the school have enjoyed looking at your photographs and being part of the selection process. A final winner will be announced in due course. All winning entries will be showcased in the Dixie Calendar and form part of the Dixie Art Exhibition in the summer term.



Aaron Patel



Issy Parkes



William Green



Tom Giles



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**Photographic
Competition 2020**

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Tom Giles



Ella Seamann



Issy Parkes



Emma Lowden



Sam Giles



Albert Pennelli



Tom Giles



Sophia Marsh



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**Musical Theatre and
Creative Arts Showcase**

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MUSICAL THEATRE SHOWCASE 2021

YEARS 6-13

FINDING A NEW WAY TO KEEP US SINGING
PRE RECORDED VOCALS - LIVE FILMING



MUSICALS

HAMILTON

HAIRSPRAY

LES MISERABLE

WICKED

BACK TO THE 80'S

DISNEY

CHICAGO

& MORE



ENSEMBLE SONGS

SOLOS

DUETS

SMALL GROUPS



HOW IT WILL WORK....

GOOGLE CLASSROOM GROUP

GOOGLE DRIVE FULL OF ALL LYRICS, MUSIC AND BACKING TRACKS

½ HOUR WEEKLY LUNCHTIME MEET TO SHARE MUSIC AND INFORMATION

EMAIL - MISS MASON BY FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12TH TO REGISTER INTEREST

We are excited in the Music Department to give the pupils the opportunity to be involved in a new style **Musical Theatre Showcase**. With theatres closed and performances cancelled, the world of Musical Theatre - performing and viewing has gone online. We have already taken advantage of the use of home rehearsing and recording and have decided to take the opportunity to do it on a larger scale. We hope to involve as many singers as we can from Years 6 - 13 in an online Musical Theatre group. Materials will be shared each week for pupils to learn at home via Google Classroom and there will be regular Google Meets to deliver information. Pupils will pre record all vocal parts at home and these will be layered to create a choir vocal track. Although we are unsure if, how and even when we may be able to perform we want to be ready when we can. Please contact Miss Mason to get started.



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**Musical Theatre and
Creative Arts Showcase**

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CREATIVE ARTS SHOWCASE



A DAY OF ART & MUSIC CELEBRATING THE TALENTS OF OUR PUPILS

HOSTED AT THE PAVILION

TIMED VIEWING SLOTS

DATE TBC SUBJECT TO RESTRICTIONS.



ART EXHIBITION

SHOWCASING THE PORTFOLIOS AND FINAL PIECES FROM OUR EXAM STUDENTS
AND ARTWORK FROM PUPILS ACROSS THE SCHOOL



LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCE

LIVE SOLO PERFORMANCES FROM OUR MUSIC EXAM STUDENTS AND OTHER YEARS.



We are planning on hosting a **Creative Arts Showcase** later in the year to showcase the fantastic Artwork the exam students and other pupils from the school have created during the year. It will be displayed down at the Pavilion with time slots given for families to come and take a look. The event will be accompanied by live music performed throughout the day by some of our talented musicians. If due to restrictions we are unable to welcome you in person, we will produce a video of all Exhibited pieces.