DEAN FIELD NEWS

Friday 23rd October 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a busy but great half-term we have had here at Dean Field. It has flown by and we have really enjoyed seeing the children engage with their learning and settle back into school routines after the summer break.

We are looking forward to our upcoming Parents' Evening on Wednesday 11th November—we hope to see you there!

Parent Communication

A reminder that our main platform for communicating with parents is Seesaw. Unfortunately, some children have missed out on things that have happened this half term because parents were not aware. In order to save paper and be environmentally friendly, the majority of our letters and announcements to parents go out on Seesaw. Please ensure that you are active on Seesaw and check regularly to ensure you don't miss out.

Have a Spooktacular half term! We look forward to seeing you in November.

If you carve a pumpkin, go trick or treating or visit a bonfire over half term, I would love to see photos of this on Seesaw!





Mrs F. Pether

Reminder— Parents of all Year 6 children please fill in your child's Secondary School application by **31st October 2026**.

You can apply online at www.calderdale.gov.uk/admissions

Poppy Appeal



Poppies will be on sale from Monday 2nd November. Children can purchase a poppy from the school office before school (from 8:30am), after school (3pm), or during break and lunchtime.

ONLINE SAFETY

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

AI COMPANIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

CENSORED

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

18 CENSORED

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 16+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school - such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 1111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book Ethical AI and Education, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2026 by Taylor and Francis.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

See full reference list on our website



Mrs Stansfield
Pastoral Manager

PASTORAL AND SEND SUPPORT IN OUR SCHOOL

Miss Clay & Mrs Stansfield



Miss Clay
SENDCo

Fidget and Sensory Tools

At Dean Field, we recognise that some children benefit from sensory and fidget tools to support attention, self-regulation and engagement in learning. These are support tools, not toys, and can play an important role in helping children access learning successfully. Recently, we have seen an increase in fidget and sensory items being brought into school from home. Unfortunately, this can sometimes lead to distractions in class, and when items are lost or damaged, children can become upset or distressed.

Therefore, we kindly ask that fidget and sensory tools are not brought into school from home. We will continue to provide school-approved sensory and fidget resources for children who need them, ensuring they are suitable, used consistently and available when required. **To be clear, this is not a ban on fidget tools.**

<u>What Are Fidget Tools Used For?</u>
•Improve focus and attention
•Regulate movement without leaving their seat
•Reduce anxiety by giving hands something purposeful to do
•Engage more fully in whole class learning
•Manage sensory needs discreetly
They are tools for regulation, not toys for play.

We already have a set of school approved fidget tools and will be replenishing stock for September to ensure we can provide them where needed. This ensures consistency, fairness and suitability across the school. Our aim is to create calm, focused learning environments while continuing to support the individual needs of all pupils.







Special Visit from the Police

We had a fantastic visit from the police, who came into our classes to talk to the children about their important role in keeping us safe. The children loved getting up close to the police car, learning about the different features and hearing the sirens!

There was lots of excitement, curiosity and brilliant questions along the way! A huge thank you to the police officers for taking the time to visit us and make learning so fun and memorable.









Halloween Discos

A huge thank you to everyone who came along to our school Halloween Disco! We had an amazing time filled with lots of dancing, laughter, spooky costumes and fantastic fun!

The children were brilliant, and it was lovely to see so many happy faces enjoying themselves. A big thank you to everyone who helped organise the disco and made it such a success.













Well done to our Pumpkin Showdown Competition

Wow! What an incredible collection of pumpkins we have had for this year's Pumpkin Showdown! We have been blown away by the creativity, imagination and effort that has gone into every entry. A huge thank you to all our children and families who took part. Choosing our winners has certainly not been easy! Congratulations to all our winners, who were announced in Friday's Gold Book Assembly. Well done, everyone!



Value Award Winners

A huge well done to our Values Award winners, who were chosen by their teachers for demonstrating our school value of honesty. We are incredibly proud of you all for setting such a fantastic example to others. Keep it up!



Free Breakfast Club





MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8-8:30AM RECEPTION TO YEAR 6

LAST ENTRY 8:20AM NO NEED TO PREBOOK - JUST TURN UP!

'Staff are amazing, caring and attentive'

'It's great for children to socialise and eat breakfast together before going to class'

'Supports the children and the transition in to class'

'It's good for parents that need to attend work'

'Great selection of different foods'



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BOOK YOUR N-Y6 CHILD ONTO THE PAID BREAKFAST CLUB FROM 7:30AM PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL OFFICE ON 01422 258 258.

Week Commencing Monday 2nd November 2026

School Meals Menu - Week 3

3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Hot Meal Option	Southern Fried Chicken Goujons 1, 5	Homemade Chicken & Sweetcorn Pie 5, 10, 12	Jumbo Fish Fingers 2, 5	Homemade Mexican Chicken	Burger in a Bun Burger 5, 8 Bun 5, 14
	Vegan Meatballs in Tomato Sauce 4	Quorn Sausages 5	Homemade Cheese & Onion Pie 5, 10, 12	Homemade Mediterranean Halloumi Traybake 10	Tomato Pasta 5
Vegetables	Wedges Mixed Veg Cauliflower	Mashed Potato 10 Peas Carrots	Chips Mushy Peas Sweetcorn	Wholemeal Pitta 5 Carrots Green Beans	Chips Peas Sweetcorn
Served Daily	Jacket Potatoes with various fillings (Tuna Mayo, Beans, Cheese) Selection of Wraps & Sandwiches Salad Bar Fresh Fruit, Yoghurts & Fruit Cocktail				
Dessert	Chocolate Arctic Roll 4, 5, 10, 12	Homemade Iced Cake 5, 10, 12	Homemade Chocolate Sponge 5, 10, 12 Custard 10	Fresh Fruit Selection	Chocolate Milkshake 5, Homemade Cookie 5, 10, 12
	Sweet Waffles 4, 5, 10, 12	Choobs 10	Raspberry Jelly	Assorted Ice Cream 10	Cornflake Buns 4, 5, 10

October Half Term Family Challenge

We're excited to launch our **first Family Challenge of the academic year!**

Get creative over half-term and share your wonderful creations on Seesaw or bring them into school by **Thursday 5th November 2026.**

Every child who takes part will receive a certificate and a small prize! We can't wait to see what you create!

Halifax Halloween Adventure

The Piece Hall – Halloween Trail & Creepy Crafts
26–31 October, 11am–2:30pm. A Harry Potter-themed trail, crafts and a prize. £3.50 per child.





Shibden Hall – Poisons and Potions Trail - 24 October–1 November. One child enters free with each paying adult using the Halloween Offer ticket.

Halifax Borough Market – Halloween Fun
30 October: face painting and balloon modelling.
31 October: trick-or-treat trail. Both 11am–3pm.



Autumn Art Attack

Collect fallen leaves, twigs and other natural treasures to create an autumn picture, woodland animal or colourful collage. How creative can you be?







Diwali Crafts

Get creative and celebrate the Festival of Lights! You could design a colourful rangoli pattern, make a beautiful paper lantern, create a Diwali card or decorate your own paper diya (lamp). Take a photograph of your wonderful creation and share it with us on Seesaw!









Autumnal / Halloween Cooking

As it is Autumn season, spend time in the kitchen making some delicious food for your family that uses them! This could be a pumpkin pie or soup or special Halloween creations! Share your recipe with your teacher and class so that they can try it!













DIARY DATES

DATE	EVENT
Friday 23rd October	Last day of school
Monday 2nd November	First day of school
Monday 2nd November	Rec + Y6 Height & Weight Checks
Wednesday 11th November	Parents' Evening

REMINDER: All school fees, dinner money, extended provision and Nursery fees need to be paid in advance.
We do not offer any credit and there are no exceptions.



REMINDER: We are a nut free school and we would appreciate that any lunchboxes do not include nut products to protect the children in school with nut allergies.

REMINDER: If your child has asthma please ensure they have an inhaler in school and you have filled out a medical form at the school office. Thank you.

Next half term's focus value is …



Accelerated Reader – Reading Achievements this week



Australia	86%
Poland	82%
Kenya	81%
Brazil	77%
Ireland	86%

You could help increase your class percentage by doing some extra reading on myON! There are thousands of books for you to choose from! If you need a reminder of your login details, please speak to your teacher. Visit https://www.myon.co.uk/login/ to start reading!

TTRS and Numbots Stars of the Week

TTRS Star of the Week
(Minutes Played)

Mason in Year 3

(33 minutes)

NumBots Star of the Week
(Minutes Played)

Daryl in Year 1

(32 minutes)

Group	% Attendance
Mexico	97.9%
China	91.7%
Australia	97.7%
Poland	97.4%
Kenya	92.9%
Brazil	98.6%
Ireland	94.8%
Total	94.5%

This Week's Attendance

Congratulations to **Brazil** class who had the highest attendance in school this week. Well done to **Mexico** class for coming second. **All classes above 96% continue to receive £5 for their jars; well done Mexico, Australia, Poland and Brazil!** I am seriously concerned of classes who are below 96%. Meetings with parents of children who are of concern will occur.

If your child is absent from school please contact the school office on **01422 258258** before 9.00am.

It is important we are aware of the reason for your child/children's absence. It becomes a safeguarding concern if parents do not inform school when their child/children are absent. Please contact the school office on the first day of absence before 9am stating reasons for any absence. This will avoid absences being recorded as unauthorised.

If you have any concerns or questions surrounding your child/children's attendance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks,
Loraine Stansfield, Pastoral Manager

School Values

CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY

Mexico Reception	Evie S	For showing the value of honesty at all times.
	Alice WW	For honesty when needing help with her work.
China Year 1	Harlo A	For being an honest member of the class.
	Emilia H	For being honest at all times.
Australia Year 2	Frankie L	For being honest about his learning and needing help.
	Nikol K	For being honest at all times.
Poland Year 3	Tallulah JF	For always being honest.
	Leo F	For being honest when needing help with your learning.
Kenya Year 4	Kaira-Jade L	For always being an honest and trustworthy class member.
	Aiden Mc	For being truthful to adults.
Brazil Year 5	Riley B	For always being honest when needing support.
	Elliot B	For always being honest.
Ireland Year 6	Millie-Lou A	For being an honest member of the class.
	Charlotte H	For being an honest member of the class.