

Dovestone Learning Partnership

Welcome to our Dovestone Learning Partnership newsletter. We aim to send out a newsletter each term to update you on DLP activities. This is our Autumn Term 2025 edition.

The DLP is a Co-operative Trust which was established in October 2017. From 1 April 2025 we became partnership of 8 primary schools:

- Christ Church Denshaw C.E. Primary School
- Delph Primary School
- Diggle Primary School
- Friezland Primary School
- Knowsley Junior School
- St Agnes C.E. Primary School
- St Mary's Greenfield C.E. Primary School
- St Thomas' Leesfield C.E. Primary School



General Update

Yet another busy but productive term for the DLP! We started with our Annual Heads' Away Day where we spent a day together reviewing and evaluating the various projects we had implemented - we wanted to ensure that they were having the impact we anticipated. We shared our data which helped inform our plans for the academic year. Heads then spent some time writing our plans. This year we have three working parties: Standards and Closing the Gap, Enrichment and Well-Being (for staff and pupils). In addition we also have a Trust-wide plan to ensure that our central functions continue to be compliant and developmental.

In October we held our Trust Board meeting. We have a few changes to our membership with Mike Anderson from Saddleworth becoming a Community Representative, Doug King, the new representative from Oldham Six Form College, Rachael Swaby, Headteacher from Delph took over the Chair and Ruth Broadhurst, Chair of Governors from Greenfield St Mary's became Vice Chair. We also welcomed Tracy Gresty as the Acting Headteacher at Knowsley Junior School. After tending to 'business' the Board went on to question and discuss the action plans. The Trust Board are responsible for holding the Heads to account for the DLP developments.

Our action plans are all available on our website. The website has undergone a review and update recently so please do check it out. Full details are below.

Some of our priorities for this year include ensuring we are all up to date and understand the changes to the new Ofsted Framework. A number of our schools could be in the Ofsted 'window' so it is essential we are ready for 'when the inspector calls'; we have also spent some time planning our CPD for the year and will be involving all staff in training to support those challenging conversations we sometimes need to have; our enrichment programme is also fully underway - there will be many exciting activities for our pupils to get involved in.

Finally we hope you are all enjoying the festive functions that are taking place in schools right now.
A very happy Christmas break to everyone.

Annual Staff Event 2025

At our staff day on 24 October 2025 our focus was Neurodiversity in the Classroom and Playground (with a particular focus on emotional school avoidance and refusal to attend school).

This event was held at St Thomas', Leesfield CE Primary School. Staff were welcomed to the event by James Whitaker, Headteacher

We were fortunate to welcome two speakers to our event. Starting with Aimee Cave, formerly National Training Officer for the ADHD Foundation Neurodiversity Charity who is now a self-employed consultant.



Aimee spoke about *Behind the Behaviour: Understanding School Non-Attendance, Emotional Regulation & The Impact of Neurodiversity*. Aimee's talk covered the theory and strategies to support a whole range of subjects including emotional regulation, co-occurrence and how neurodiversity affected girls. She then went on to discuss how this could show in the classroom. We also looked at what could trigger anxiety in children and young people which could result in a refusal to come to school. She gave information about these behaviours which could help teachers understand pupils' behaviour to a greater extent.



She was followed by Lisa Gaunt, Primary Outreach Officer, Kingsland School whose theme was *Behaviour as Communication; Understanding how behaviour presents in school and strategies that help*. Lisa talked about how children communicate by the way they behave and this can be seen in a physical, emotional or sensory way. She discussed trauma and mental health and presented three models of evidenced-based interventions. Probably one of the most impactful aspect was 'when Lisa asked 'What do children do that push buttons?' Followed by 'and what do you do that pushes theirs?' She then gave some practical strategies for staff to try in the classroom.



Staff appreciated both the theory and the practical aspects of the presentations and it was good to have everyone there together to hear key messages. We finished with a buffet lunch and time to talk before going back to school to see how things we had heard could be put into practice.



Times Table Rock Stars Competition: Autumn Term 2025



As is now tradition, our termly Times Table Rock Stars competition took place in November! All eight primary schools within our partnership participated, putting their times tables skills to the ultimate test.

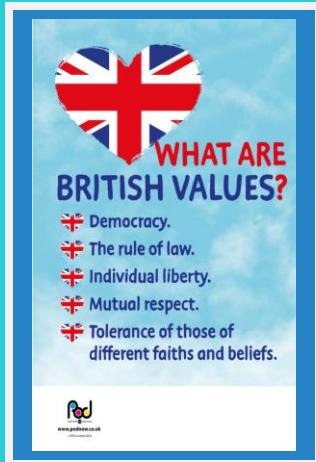
Mastering times tables is a crucial building block in a child's mathematical journey. Not only does it improve speed and accuracy in basic arithmetic, but it also helps children develop stronger problem-solving skills, enhances their ability to tackle more complex math concepts, and builds confidence in their abilities. A solid understanding of times tables forms the foundation for success in future math challenges, from fractions to algebra. It's not just about memorising numbers—it's about fostering a deeper understanding of how numbers work together!

The children demonstrated impressive speed and accuracy, showing just how much they've mastered their times tables. It was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate their hard work and dedication while making learning fun and competitive. A huge congratulations to everyone involved—your efforts truly rocked!

Our Autumn Term winners will be announced in the New Year.

Super Council

Our first Super Council of the year took place in October and was hosted by Knowsley Junior School. It was well attended, with only one school unable to join us. The topic of the meeting was British Values. We introduced the five values but specifically concentrated on Individual Liberty and Rule of Law. The pupils participated in a variety of activities and all contributed to the session. It was lovely to meet a new cohort of school councillors. They were given a pack, as they were leaving, which included a poster and activities to promote and raise awareness about British Values in their own schools. We look forward to seeing the pupils again in March at our next Super Council meeting, where the focus will be on wellness and mental health awareness.



Holiday Club

FunFest Holiday Club will be open at Friezland Primary School from 22nd to 24th December, 8.00am – 6.00pm. Full day £35, half day £20, sibling discounts and childcare vouchers accepted.

Click this link to book: <https://fun-fest.co.uk/greenfield/>

Meet the DLPers!

As part of our regular feature of introducing you to people in the DLP. This edition we have another special person for you to meet - Debbie Pietkiewicz



Hi everyone most of you know me but if you don't I would like to introduce myself. I'm Debbie Pietkiewicz DLP's school counsellor. I have worked with children, young people and families all my working life. (That's a long time!)

My very first job was a Nanny in Germany where I coupled this with being a nursery nurse in the British forces and as a fabulous army wife. (Yes it was like soldier soldier!)

After leaving the army I worked with Oldham family support for 7 years being part of one of the very first sure start projects. This gave me my real passion for working with teen parents.

From there I worked with Brook sexual health clinic for 9 years. (I have lots of stories here as you can imagine.)

I decided to train as a counsellor in 2016 and went onto work at Styal prison. This was simply fabulous. Setting up a counselling service for the woman was a honour.

I then worked at Off the Record counselling services for 9 years as their lead sexual and domestic abuse counsellor. I was really lucky to also work alongside the sexual exploitation team at Greater Manchester police as their counsellor for young people.

I decided to start my own business "Concentric Circles" 3 years ago after being made redundant.

Wow what can I say here? This part of my life has enabled me to put all my life experiences into real play.

I was lucky enough to be asked to be the DLP's school counsellor and what a pleasure this has been.

In 3 years I have worked with over 250 children, 40 parents and clinically supervised nearly all you wonderful headteachers.

I would like to think I have made a difference, and helped every single person I see to shine and really recognise how powerful and strong they are.

Taking my business forward I would love to work in senior schools as I do feel some year 6 children need that continuous support. I am also looking at doing training packages for parents and teachers, continuing with my private practice and truly putting the meaning of concentric circles into practice.

Well that's me! My trade mark is "glitter". People who play with glitter are never forgotten. I truly wish every human I reach out to remembers that crazy counsellor who believed in them and loved glitter.



DLP Sports Update

The recent series of football matches between St Thomas' Leesfield and other DLP schools has been a fantastic showcase of sporting spirit, with teams demonstrating great teamwork, resilience and impressive skills throughout. It has been wonderful to see so many parents attending and supporting the players from the sidelines, creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere. We are looking forward to an exciting round robin competition in the final week of the term, where all our schools will come together to compete in the hope of becoming the overall DLP football champions.



At St. Thomas' Leesfield, we have recently held an exciting Archery and Target Games Festival, bringing pupils together for a day of skill, focus, and friendly competition. Pupils impressed the staff and peers with their aim during their day of archery, curling, golf and hockey. The festival celebrated not only athletic ability but also perseverance, sportsmanship, and teamwork. The pupils had a great day and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



The children at Christ Church CE Primary School had a great day taking part in the Oldham Athletic Community Trust sponsored penalty shootout. The children were asked to wear blue and orange outfits or Oldham Athletics football shirts and they all looked great.



We are very proud to say we have raised £1,292. which is a fantastic amount of money. Winners received a signed Ball, Oldham Athletic FC Medals & match day tickets. For raising the most amount of sponsorship money our pupil, Mellie, won a signed OAFC Shirt which was presented on the pitch.

Also through our partnership with OACT our Year 6 football team has the opportunity to take part in the EFL Kids Cup Competition. They really enjoyed the experience and did the school proud showing great sportsmanship and teamwork.

Well done boys.



DLP Links with Oldham Athletic FC Community Trust

As with the two articles above this term, pupils across the Dovestone Learning Partnership have been delighted to strengthen our link with Oldham Athletic Football Club through a special community project. Working together with the club, children from all schools created thoughtful, beautifully designed Christmas cards to be shared with residents in local care homes.



The project not only showcased the creativity of our pupils but also embodied the spirit of kindness and connection at the heart of our partnership. We are incredibly proud of the care and effort the children put into spreading a little festive joy to others.

Keep UpToDate with the DLP

You can keep up to date with us in the following ways

Facebook – search for Dovestone Learning Partnership – follow us – give us a like and receive regular updates. Please share with your family and friends

Instagram – we can be found at [dovestonelearningpartnership/](https://www.instagram.com/dovestonelearningpartnership/)

Twitter – find us at [@DovestoneLP](https://twitter.com/DovestoneLP)

Website – Our website has had a make-over. Please check it out. Here you will find more detailed information about the DLP such as events, action plans, board meetings and our trustees.

www.dovestonelearningpartnership.co.uk

Would you like to get involved with Dovestone Learning Partnership????

DLP would like to have some community representatives on their Trust Board. The Board meets three times a year and you would become a trustee of the partnership. Your role would be to represent the Saddleworth and Lees community. That would mean asking questions and making comments and suggestions for the work we do. If you are interested please email juliebowdidge@googlemail.com or telephone 07515257389 for more information.

We would love to hear from you.



The Staff, Pupils and Governors would like to wish you all a
Very Happy Christmas.
Here's to a fabulous 2026!