

**Principals Annual Report**  
**The Dartford Cooperative Learning Trust**  
**February 2023**

The work completed under the Trust umbrella is categorised by the 3 dividends of :

- Community Outreach
- STEM enhancement
- Careers Ambition

**Community Outreach**

I have only included in this report outreach where multiple stakeholders have taken part or been involved. We also do lots of school community events and/or events where one stakeholder is involved.

**Chinese Chefs - 17th March 2022**

On Monday 17th we welcomed Healthy Chinese Cuisine Ambassadors. They are the education arm of Lee Kum Kee sauces. They aim to show students how healthy and quick Chinese cooking can be.

We had two sessions with Year 9 DSTC students pairing up with Year 5 students from Westgate and Wentworth primary schools.

**Matilda Junior – School production - March 2022**

Matilda the Musical Junior was a resounding success with our audience, staff and students having an excellent experience. Our team worked incredibly hard since last year to prepare and plan the show, with students making great efforts to learn the drama, dance and songs. We sold out on both nights, engaging over 300 members of the school community and members of the public. We were also delighted to invite Westgate Primary school to a matinee performance, engaging with a local feeder school. This further enhanced our relationship with our most local primary School to DSTC.

We are looking forward to our 2023 production of Aladdin Junior.

**The Great Dartford Schools Litterpick -10th June 2022**

This was funded by Dartford Borough Council (DBC) and organised by DSTC. Out of the 31 schools within Dartford, 25 took part.

We had celebrity endorsement from Sarah Roberts - children author, TV host and environmental campaigner.

Primary and secondary lessons were produced and set to all schools participating.

## **Community Day - 15th July 2022**

607 students  
70 staff  
48 placements

The sponsors this year were:

- Balfour Beatty
- KCC Councillors:
- Gareth Johnson MP
- Bluewater
- Fox Estates
- Downton & Ali Associates
- Wright Dance

The VIP was Lady Colgrain, Lieutenant of Kent. We will again pursue a Royal visit and inviting the Lieutenant of Kent is a prerequisite.

The Mayor of Dartford, Jeremy Kite and Mayor of Swanley also visited placements.

We were able to raise £1,238.40 on the day. This means that over the 6 years we have raised around £10,000.

- Mary's Child - £257.47
- Ellenor - £321.74
- Demelza - £263.00
- Slade Green Food Bank - £232.17
- Beams - £164.02

Pictures: <https://tinyurl.com/CommDay2022>

The Community Day as a concept is unique. The long term relationships with these groups are substantial and students have undertaken further work in some areas and also it has generated new aspirations in some.

## **DSTC Summer Fayre - July 2022**

A new event for DSTC, the Summer Fayre brought local families together with the school community in the summer of 2022. We offered an excellent selection of activities and stalls, including fairground-style games, inflatables, a drinks tent and a BBQ. This event brings together families who want to celebrate Summer with us, as well as potential new families to the school.

### **DSTC Christmas Market - November 2022**

DSTC was able to run its highly successful Christmas Market once again in 2022. With 100's of families coming through the door, this event provides an inclusive and financially accessible Christmas experience for locals. The event includes a wide variety of stalls and activities, with a real highlight being our "Christmas Grotto" complete with a visit to Father Christmas.

This event supports engagement with local families, that can include prospective parents and students. It raises the profile of DSTC as a school that engages with and supports the local community. We are proud to say the market will continue again this year in 2023.

### **Foodbank - December 2022**

Every year we have a collection for the Dartford Foodbank. The students and parents are generous and we take the minibus full of food every year. Students who accompany the teacher then have a tour of the foodbank and get to understand its work.

### **Senior Citizens Afternoon Tea - December 2022**

This year we had around 70 senior citizens from the community - some grandparents of students, some ex-students and community members. We had £1000 from two KCC councillors as part of the KCC Post Covid fund to rebuild community gatherings.

Feedback from a governor who attended: "I invited people from different backgrounds who might need company".

Happily everyone enjoyed themselves as you can see from the responses below: "nice greeting on arrival", "surprised by how students were well behaved and good dress code", "took me back to my school days", "good fun afternoon", "forgot about covid", nice meeting different people", "enjoyed the singing and dancing", "lovely food and hall beautifully decorated", "nice talking to students", "5 star food", "great selection of cakes" and "good fun with bingo". The responses came from members of Fairfield leisure centre, Dartford Ramblers, Wilmington village hall members and retired teachers.

## **STEM**

STEM continues to be a focus of the school and it has been good for students to experience in-person workshops and visits.

Three members of the current teaching staff were recruited to be part of the STEM team and help coordinate events and activities across the school which has been very successful.

### **STEM Round-up**

Students across all year groups have experienced a variety of STEM events and activities.

As it was so successful last year, during the summer school, Year Six students were again able to build and programme Lego robots which taught them valuable IT skills that they were then able to use when they arrived at DSTC in September. This was then expanded to an after-school Lego robotics club run by Mr Jooman where students get to apply their STEM skills combined with critical thinking to use the robots to solve a variety of everyday problems.

Years 7-8 students have been participating in their STEM Extended learning project (ELP) where they have been building floating gardens or researching STEM careers to present. Year 9 will also be partaking in their ELP in the summer.

Years 7-9 have participated in the 'I'm a Scientist/Engineer/Mathematician' series where they are able to converse and interact with graduates in these areas, asking them about their roles and how they got into that line of research.

Years 7-9 also entered a competition run by the Royal Aeronautical Society, designing a flight simulator and two of the teams achieved a commendation and are through to the next round.

Year 9 had a visit from an engineer who gave them a talk all about the importance of engineering and careers in this area. The students were able to ask him questions and hear about his work and how he believed there needed to be more females in engineering sectors.

Year 10 and 11 students have attended workshops and events run by Ebbsfleet Garden City and University of Kent regarding engineering careers. Similarly, PP students in Year 10 were invited to the 'Kent Youth Summit' a day run by the University of Creative Arts (UCA) exploring how creativity and STEM work well together. Students learnt about how we can use algae to help produce sustainable fashion.

All students have also experienced a variety of online sessions run by the STEM Hub including 'insights from the James Webb telescope' and 'The really big, really small show' concerning the life cycle of a star and particle physics and microorganisms respectively.

## **Clubs**

We continue to offer a variety of extra-curricular STEM clubs including the following: Maths Club, Maths Past-Paper Society, Science Club, Lego Robotics, Engineering Club and Jewellery making club.

## **Activities Week**

In July, we hosted our own end of term Activity days where students participated in a whole range of STEM related activities.

Year 7 learnt about Space, had a talk from a STEM ambassador about astronomy and also visited the astrodome.

Year 8 learnt all about evolution and adaptation through a visit from the Owl and Raptor Centre and a visit to the zoo.

Year 9 completed engineering based tasks as part of taskmaster and learnt how to reuse materials in their recycling fashion show.

## **DSTC Careers Update**

### **DSTC Careers Champion**

- Susan Pearson is our Careers Champion.

### **Gatsby Benchmarks and use of the Compass Tool**

The eight Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework for good career guidance developed to support secondary schools in providing students with the best possible careers education, information, advice, and guidance.

The “Compass Plus” tool for schools in England is software that quickly and easily helps us to evaluate our careers activity against the eight Gatsby benchmarks of best practice. “Compass Plus” allows us to track careers engagement at student level, giving DSTC a more accurate picture of how students respond to careers-based opportunities.

We completed another Compass Tool self-assessment to track our efforts with careers

To enhance current provision even further DSTC aims to:

1. Enable pupils to have access to accurate records about their own careers and enterprise experiences
2. Collect and maintain accurate data for each pupil on their destinations for 3 years after they leave DSTC
3. Ensure after the global pandemic subsides, more of our students in Years 7,8,9,11 and 13 have at least 76-100% of one encounter with an employer or employee. (*Years 10 and 12 will have undertaken Virtual Work Experience*)
4. Explore ways to involve businesses in our careers activity during Covid recovery. (*N.B - Barclays, Speakers for Schools, SpringPod and Fledglink have all been providers for our VWEX programme.*)
5. Provide new ways of working with Independent Training Providers, Higher Education (such as the London Interdisciplinary School and Kent Uni)

### **DSTC Website: Careers**

- We are continuing to update and develop our careers section of the DSTC website - this contains a whole range of opportunities, information and guidance. This includes a comprehensive apprenticeship section, with advice updated monthly. We have recently added additional resources for teachers to access, so they can support careers guidance at classroom-level.
- We have recently added dedicated T-Level and Apprenticeship advice to our website in line with the new Provider Access Legislation.
- The upgraded careers section has enabled us to be more Gatsby-compliant.

- As our careers section of the site has been enhanced, this has now replaced the proposal for the staff handbook being updated with careers advice. With the Information online, it means parents and students can access our information remotely.
- <https://www.dstc.kent.sch.uk/careers>

### **Virtual Work Experience (VWEX)**

- DSTC has made the decision to Continue to offer Virtual, as well as Face to Face, Work Experience for Years 10 and 12 (VWEX). We promote the use of websites such as “The Forage” and “Springpod” that offer a wide range of VWEX opportunities for students.
- Work Experience takes place in the last week of the Summer Term

### **1- to -1 Careers Advice**

- Our 1-to-1 careers advice continues to be delivered by **CXK** (<https://www.cxk.org/>)
- 1-to-1 careers advice takes place in school, face-to-face.
- Students receive a form which contains helpful advice and further guidance on next steps with careers advice.
- Additional resources are being sent from CXK to support students who are waiting for their careers interview