



6th October 2026



WELCOME TO YEAR 8

Year Leader: Mr Argyrides

Deputy Year Leader: Ms Bolt



School vision

...to develop knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world.



Whole school priorities

A caring, open-minded and principled community

High quality teaching

A rich curriculum

Life-transforming outcomes & destinations

Very high levels of student attendance



Attendance

24.21% of secondary school students missed 10% or more of school, compared to 13.90% in primary schools

Missing just **10 days of school in Year 11 halves the likelihood** of a student achieving a Grade 5 in both English and Maths compared to peers with **95%+ attendance**

90% attendance across 5 years of secondary school = 1/2 an academic year of missed learning

The overall absence rate in state-funded secondary schools reached **8.57%** in 2025/2026

In 2022/2023, 60% of pupils who missed a day in week 1 of the academic year went on to be PA (for the year) – **absence sticks**



Attendance in year 8

Current attendance

95.5%

25/26 attendance

96.4%

7-10 attendance 25/26

94.2%

7-11 attendance T1-5 25/26

94% with 13.8% PA



Supporting your child's attendance

Build a consistent routine

- Treat school days as being non-negotiable (avoid term-time holidays and try to limit medical appointments during the school day)
- Encourage your child to get organised the night before (uniform, bag packed)
- Sleep, exercise and time away from screens

Use support systems early (teachers, mentor, year leader and safeguarding staff)

- If your child is finding attendance difficult, don't wait - let the school know

Keep motivation high

- Celebrate good attendance and progress



Priorities in year 8

1. Routines

- Classroom routines (Ready to learn, ready to leave)
- Mentoring routines

2. Setting strong behaviour habits

- On time to school/lessons
- Knowing what good behaviour is
- Aspiring to achieve the very best

3. Attendance



Curriculum in year 8

Over the course of the year students will investigate 6 themes that are at the core of a successful life at Dane Court Grammar School. Students will work together as a mentor group and explore the following:

01



Caring

02



Study Skills

03



PSHE Curriculum

04



Careers

05



Online
Safeguarding

06



Politics



Curriculum in year 8

Languages - developing **practical communication skills** across key everyday themes while expanding foundational grammar through past, present, and future tenses.

Maths - **builds key foundational skills** across factors and powers, perimeter, area, volume, 2D/3D shapes, angles, graphs, fractions, equations, decimals, and sequences.

English - **themes of perception, identity, and the power of perspective** through Gothic prose, Romantic and natural world poetry, non-fiction and Shakespearean comedy.

Humanities - builds **critical analytical skills across time and space** - exploring early modern and modern world history, analysing global human and physical geography and evaluating how religious and ethical beliefs shape responses to real-world moral issues.



Curriculum in year 8

Sciences - deepens core principles through practical inquiry, exploring electricity, space, forces, and waves in Physics; atomic structure, group trends, rates of reaction, and the atmosphere in Chemistry; and nutrition, digestion, respiration, and ecosystems in Biology.

Practical Subjects - expands technical competence and creative expression. Developing physical movement, tactics, and fair play in PE; investigating cross-cultural non-verbal/figurative art skills in Art & Design; exploring world music, harmonic progressions, and composition in Music; and performing devised work in Drama.



Trips and events in year 8

- **Whole year school trip** - currently in the process of being planned and hoping to release this to everyone soon.
- **Year 8 Information Evening** - Wednesday 17th March
- **Year 8 Parents Evening** - Tuesday 8th June

Last year...

- 75% of students from year 7-12 attended a school trip.
- 68.1% whole school attended extra curricular activities in school

Please encourage your young people to consider their extra-curricular and super curricular offer.

WELCOME TO YEAR 8



PSHE Curriculum

Term 1 Staying safe - The Online World	Term 2 Staying safe - Drugs & Alcohol	Term 3 Respectful Relationships
Term 4 Careers & Living in the Wider World	Term 5 Personal Safety and Managing Risk	Term 6 Citizenship
External Speakers: Everyday racism, RNLI, Kent AA		



**Student
ambassadors**

Students now in year 9

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Parent App



Download on the
App Store



GET IT ON
Google Play

The Dane Court Grammar School app can easily be found on the app store and is ready to download.

How We Are Using the App

- **Messages (Push Notifications):** This is our primary tool for direct updates. Please ensure notifications are enabled on your phone so you receive immediate alerts when a message is sent.
- **Absence Reporting:** You can now report student absences directly through the app. As a reminder, we require daily notifications for any ongoing absence. If you are picking your child up early for an appointment, please include the collection time and the reason in your message.
- **Student Timetables:** Easily view your child's daily schedule.
- **Newsfeed:** Check this tab regularly for celebratory stories, student achievements, and general school news. *(Note: Newsfeed updates do not trigger push notifications, so be sure to browse it periodically!)*

FREE SCHOOL MEALS



The deadline for applying for Free School Meals has been extended to **2nd November**. All children from households in receipt of Universal Credit are entitled to receive free school meals.

If your household receives Universal Credit, you could save up to £495 per year per child on school lunches. For families with multiple children, these savings can make a substantial difference to household budgets.

Beyond the financial benefits, this programme ensures children receive nutritious meals during school hours, which supports their learning and concentration in the classroom, physical health and development and overall wellbeing.

www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals





Dane Court website

Mental Health and Wellbeing Page

<https://www.danecourt.kent.sch.uk/wellbeing>



Family Support Page

<https://www.danecourt.kent.sch.uk/familysupport>





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WELCOME TO YEAR 8

Mentoring

WELCOME TO YEAR 8



Mentoring curriculum

Daily Plan Yr 8

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A	Assembly	Silent Reading + Extended Mentoring	Mentor Curriculum	Mentor Booklet + Extended Mentoring	In The News
B	Assembly	Silent Reading + Extended Mentoring	Mentor Curriculum	Mentor Booklet + Extended Mentoring	Student Assembly



Mentoring curriculum

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Politics



Ask the mentor

What does it mean to be a student in this form?

What we do during mentor times?

What do we need to improve on as a mentor group?

What opportunities are there for students in this form to get involved in the wider school community?

How do we review effort with your child after reporting data points?

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Contact the mentor

8B: Ms Whicker whicker@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

8D: Ms Blanden & Mr Luckett

blanden@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

cluckett@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

8H: Mr Birkitt bbirkitt@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

8N: Miss Cielinska kcielinska@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

8S: Ms Jones & Ms Warren

cjones@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

mwarren@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

8T: Mr Lancaster alancaster@danecourt.kent.sch.uk