

HEAD-ITORIAL

Holidays in term time

You are probably aware that there has been a big drive from central government to reduce the number of school days missed by children due to family holidays. Why does it matter? The evidence is quite compelling: children with poor attendance are very many times more likely to underachieve at school.

The government's resolve on the matter has resulted in greater legal powers for local authorities and much stronger advice for schools. I thought it would be timely (as it's the time of year when families start to think about booking summer holidays) to explain Sheldon's policy and expectations.

We expect that parents will not book family holidays during school time. So Sheldon will not, in normal circumstances, authorise such holidays. However, we recognise that in some *exceptional* circumstances, a family may wish to request authorisation of a child's absence to go on holiday. An exceptional circumstance may be something like a family wedding. In such cases, we will consider the exceptional circumstances and may authorise the absence - but not if the child already has less than 92% attendance overall.

I'm confident it won't arise at Sheldon, where parents are invariably supportive, but the local authority now has the power to fine parents for taking holidays in term time.

Please get in touch with your child's head of year before you make any financial commitments, they will be able to discuss the exceptional circumstances with you and give an indication of our likely response.

Gerard MacMahon, Headteacher

Language College News

Coming soon - Language Ambassadors!

The Modern Languages Faculty will soon be inviting some members of Year 10 and those doing AS French or German in Year 12 to become Sheldon's first Language Ambassadors. These students will have the opportunity to work with younger pupils and will play a key role in promoting languages across the school.

German Exchange March 2010

If you are in Years 9, 10 or 12 and would like to be involved in next year's exchange, please bring your slips back as soon as possible to Mrs Jordan-Barr or Mr Barfield. This is a fantastic opportunity to get to know the culture as well as the language of the country and has proved to be a superb experience for those who have taken part in the past.



Thank you to everyone who sent in blankets after my recent appeal. There was a wonderful response and these have been handed out. They were very gratefully received. Some Year 11 pupils have even asked about volunteering with the group! Many, many thanks.

Eleanor Besley

Sheldon Sports Hall

We would like to welcome the new pupils and parents to the school and would like to draw your attention to the facilities offered at the Sports Hall. We are open in the evenings, weekends and holidays for bookings for football, badminton, cricket and basket ball. Children's football and mini tennis parties can also be booked at the weekend and during the holidays. The Sports Hall also hosts several badminton clubs, gymnastics, tae kwon do clubs and a ballet school that would welcome your interest. At present we have vacant time on Saturdays for whole hall booking.

The Sports Hall runs a small coffee shop which is open from 3.15 pm weekdays also weekends for pupils, staff and Sports hall users. For more details please contact Lynne Gill on 01249 651056 or email sporthall@sheldonschool.co.uk

Sheldon Young Musicians Excel!

Tuesday 20 October saw the annual Rotary Young Musician Competition take place at Hardenhuish School, involving pupils from Sheldon, Hardenhuish and Abbeyfield Schools. The competition was adjudicated by Nicholas Keyworth and the pupils competed in two categories: Intermediate and Senior. Sheldon was represented by Hannah Crocker (voice) and Robert Scoynes (piano) in the Intermediate category, while Jacob Byrne (piano), David Knight (saxophone) and Ruth Knight (flute) performed in the Senior category. All the pupils gave superb performances to a large and appreciative audience, but the adjudicator placed Ruth Knight in second place for her performance of Poulenc's *Allegro Malinconico*, and Jacob Byrne in first place for his "mesmerising" performance of Debussy's *Clair de Lune*. Both Ruth and Jacob are A-level music students with aspirations to study music at university. The Music Department is very proud of all the performers - well done to them all!

Congratulations to Sam Kershaw and Callum Harris of 9JSD and Huw Parks of 9JDK who were successful at the Dorset and Wilts RFU District Rugby Trials and have now progressed to the final squad of 30 players

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Sheldon Standard

Issue No 224 - Friday 6 November 2009

CHARITY RUGBY MATCH FOR JAY



On 23 September Sheldon and Hardenhuish competed in a charity rugby match in aid of Jay Ryles-Jenkins.

£2500 +

On the afternoon of the match close friends of Jay visited him in Frenchay Hospital to celebrate his birthday with him and his family, bringing him presents and decorations. Players and helpers began arriving at the Rugby Club in preparation for the match at around 5.30 pm, with kick off at 7 pm. Both teams began warming up for the big game as spectators began to arrive, each donating £2 and over towards the fund for Jay. The Wiltshire Gazette and Herald arrived to take pictures of the teams and the people involved.

About 600 people arrived during the evening to watch the match. It was a close fought game but in the end Sheldon came through on top, beating Hardenhuish 41-10, and afterwards there was still plenty more to come - a raffle with many prizes, and a silent auction for Bath Rugby tickets. This raised over £210. The Rugby Club put on food - chilli and a pint for £5 with £1 from every sale being donated to the fund (raising £120+); Starbucks Coffee chain provided coffee to sell throughout the evening (raising £150+). Music from Energy Without the Sun, Gabee Aplin and Kate Douglas gave the evening a great atmosphere, and speeches by Sue Jenkins, Mr Douglas and Mr Weller rounded off the evening beautifully, highlighting the need for headgear for the players, and also thanking everyone for attending.

Anyone still wishing to donate can make cheques out to Sheldon School or give money into the Finance Office. Overall over £2500 was raised and we're still counting!! Thank you to everyone who came along to the event, took part, helped with the organising and running of the match, and to everyone who donated. It was a brilliant night and a fantastic amount of money was raised to help Jay.

Well done to everyone!!!



The Sheldon school allotment will be shortly constructed in anticipation of running as a lower school club. Whilst primarily aimed at Year 7, pupils from Years 8 and 9 are also welcome to get their own plot of land and grow their own choice of produce, details of how to sign up will follow in registers. However if any parents do have any tools e.g. spades, wheelbarrows, forks or trowels which need a good home, we'd be more than happy to adopt them for the club if you leave them at reception!

Richard Square

SPORTS AMBASSADORS 2009-2010

Y7	Joe Thomas RGK	Gabby Jones RGK
Y8	Lewis Stuart Payne HMW	Amy Harper HMW
Y9	Macaulay Gibbs CMO	Daisy Thomas RWF
Y10	Pavraj Lochab JXS	Annabelle Aplin hem
Y11	Matt Stevens VHM	Rachel Sykes AEH
Y12	Jess Walton KXT	Michael Piesse WMB
Y13	Nick Parks RXM	Emily Stainthorpe ISB

Congratulations to you all!



Congratulations to Scott Trainor (13MZL) who, in assembly this week, was presented with an RAF Sixth Form Scholarship grant of £1000 by Flight Lt Elliott.

Collecting Children from After School Activities

Now that the nights are drawing in and the weather is colder we would like to remind pupils not to wait for parents in the layby/visitors' car park near the road, for their own safety and that of road users.

If pupils have stayed for after school clubs or revision sessions they should be collected from the car parks by reception or near the Sports Hall. In that way children can shelter inside if necessary and an adult will be nearby.

Baby news at Sheldon



Congratulations to Nicky Butterworth, Head of Year 13, and her husband, who have become the very proud parents of Oliver William James, born during the holiday.

Also congratulations to Darren Grainger, Head of Science, and his wife, on the safe arrival of Albi, born yesterday.



sheldonstandard@gmail.com
www.sheldonschool.co.uk