

Sheldon School

Chippenham



PROSPECTUS

Welcome to Sheldon School

Choosing the right secondary school for your child is one of the most important decisions that you will make with your son or daughter. At Sheldon we believe that we have a school that will enable your child to thrive and develop into a confident young adult, achieve excellent qualifications and leave very well-prepared for their life ahead.

Crucial to the success of any educational establishment is the quality of its pastoral care. At Sheldon, the welfare of our young people is of paramount importance. We have a very strong pastoral guidance system: the personal development and educational progress of students is supported and monitored closely by tutors and heads of year, with student wellbeing supported through our extensive team within Student Services, including dedicated staff assigned to each year group, an adult mentor and a full-time school counsellor. Parental engagement is actively encouraged and made possible through a number of opportunities throughout the year.

We are committed to the highest possible standards and expect our students to be aspirational in everything they do. We strive to provide an excellent education and our students



Neil Spurdell
HEADTEACHER

do very well in public examinations, both at GCSE and at A Level. But school is about more than examination results and our students are actively encouraged to take part in one of the many extra-curricular activities, which extend to over 50 each week.

It is our desire that all students should enjoy their learning and their whole school experience and we work extremely hard to ensure that this is the case. Parents and other visitors to Sheldon frequently comment on the positive, friendly and purposeful atmosphere, essential in making sure we have a school delivering a high quality education for all.

I hope that you will find this prospectus useful and informative and that it manages to convey some of the atmosphere of Sheldon. We invite you, parents and prospective students, into our school to see us in action and I look forward to meeting you then.



**THE VIBRANT ATMOSPHERE YOU HAVE CREATED
REFLECTS YOUR COMMITMENT TO PUPILS'
ENRICHING AND POSITIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES"**

OFSTED



**THE ALL-PERVADING CARING
ETHOS ENSURES THAT PUPILS
ARE HAPPY AND ABLE TO THRIVE
FROM THE MOMENT THEY
ARRIVE IN SCHOOL"**

OFSTED 2017





VISION AND CORE VALUES

OUR VISION:

To be a forward-thinking and outward-looking school, where aspirations are high and ambitions unlimited. A confident community, where teaching is inspirational, every individual valued and students are resilient, successful and proud of their school.

VALUES:

We value and instil in our students key personal qualities: honesty and integrity, kindness, respect, courtesy, tolerance, and life skills to support them towards their life beyond school, equipping them for their future in an ever-changing world.

We are truly comprehensive in that we nurture the needs of the 'whole child' and encourage a love of learning across all areas of the curriculum. Challenging students to reach their potential is a given. We recognise that talent spreads beyond the classroom and takes a variety of forms.

We are a community where relationships are strong, students are heavily involved in the life of the school, and where students and staff are happy.



TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheldon has very well-established links with all of its primary schools, which facilitates a smooth transition from primary to secondary school. Our primary liaison coordinator oversees a range of activities to make the move as seamless as possible.

This includes pupils from primary schools being given the opportunity to visit Sheldon to experience a full day's lessons; two open days in June when parents and their children can see the school in action and be shown around by students from Years 10 and 12; and a prospective parents' evening in late June for those pupils considering transfer to Sheldon in the following July. Open mornings will also run in mid September for those who would like to look around the school and, in addition, the headteacher is very happy to show parents and children around the school throughout the academic year.

A unique feature locally is that Sheldon begins its academic year in July, rather than September. This enables primary pupils to come to the school for 'turnaround week' and follow a complete week on the timetable before the start of the summer holidays. We find this to be hugely beneficial in helping pupils settle into Sheldon life with confidence.



MY SON GOES TO SCHOOL HAPPY AND RETURNS HOME HAPPY. THAT IS THE BEST RESULT FOR US AS PARENTS. THANK YOU!"

YEAR 8 PARENT





**YOUR SCHOOL POLICIES
ENSURE THAT EVERY PUPIL
FEELS A PART OF THE LARGER
COMMUNITY AND THIS
ALLOWS THEM TO THRIVE."**

OFSTED 2017



THE CURRICULUM

We strive to provide a curriculum that is inclusive, broad, balanced and engaging. We are committed to developing knowledge, skills and creativity and we encourage our students to be organised, reflective, independent learners. At every stage of their school career, we facilitate our students in taking their next steps, supporting them to be successful in their future studies and the workplace.

The curriculum is designed so that all students enjoy a wide variety of subjects in Years 7 to 11 and we are proud to ensure that all our students experience at least three Years' study of the arts, design and technology, languages, humanities and computing. This is alongside maths, English, science, PSRE and PE which all students study from Year 7 to Year 11. We run an open options system for our students when choosing the subjects for Years 10 and 11 and for Sixth Form. This enables our students to focus on areas of the curriculum about which they are most passionate and interested and that are likely to play a more prominent role in their futures.

We value highly areas of the curriculum which are non-examined, continuing to place huge importance on physical education and personal and social development throughout Years 7 to 11 and this continues into our Sixth Form. Impartial careers advice is offered from Year 8 through the PSRE curriculum and with support from our careers advisor. This is built on through our work experience programme in Years 10 and 12 and a dedicated focus in class ensures that each student considers their future potential career in depth. Above all, we believe we provide a curriculum that enables everyone to find enjoyment and succeed.





MY EXPERIENCE OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS IS THAT SHELDON IS A GREAT SCHOOL WHERE STAFF ARE CONSISTENTLY POSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE, THE BEHAVIOUR GOOD, AND THE CHILDREN WANT TO DO WELL."

YEAR 13 PARENT

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Offering a wide range of opportunities for student leadership is a key priority at Sheldon.

We believe strongly that the benefits of student leadership are wide and varied. Leadership is encouraged from the start of Year 7, with opportunities to contribute to whole school decision-making through year and school councils and charity committees. For students in Year 8 and above, a strong student ambassador programme runs in many subject areas, with students leading peers, primary pupils and clubs. In Year 11, the majority of students aspire to being successful in the rigorous process of the selection of prefects. An elected 60-strong team led by the Head Prefects is hugely influential in the life and ethos of the school, both day-to-day and at all public events.

Our leadership possibilities mean that students act as role models for their peers; make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community; develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate positively in society; are able to express their views and ideas about the school; and contribute to decisions about their learning.





CARE AND GUIDANCE

Every student is treated as an individual in our fully inclusive and caring community. At Sheldon, we pride ourselves on the quality of care, guidance and support given to our pupils.

At the heart of this provision is a year system led by a head of year, a deputy head of year and a team of highly committed tutors. The tutor will normally remain with the tutor group throughout Years 7 to 11, as does the head and deputy head of year; as a result, these staff come to know the students extremely well. The dedicated and highly skilled Student Services team and school counsellor are also available.

We are committed to making sure that every child feels safe and happy in school and our tutor programme ensures that all students know what to do if they need help. This programme supports the development of the 'whole child', reinforcing our core values, developing study skills and giving children opportunities for discussion and debate. In addition, each tutor has one period each week to work individually with tutees to discuss progress and identify any possible barriers to learning. Tutors play a key role in ensuring that students are happy, well-supported in making the right decisions and fully engaged in school life.

A regular dialogue is established between home and school via the tutor. There are also several opportunities throughout the year for parents to come into school and engage with staff. These include parents' evenings, as well as parent forums. Parent Forums sometimes centre around a specific focus, for example how to support your child with revision, how to help keep your child safe online, or how to support your child if they are feeling stressed. General parent forums and parent consultation evenings also take place where parents are asked to feed back on school issues and help be a part of developing the school further.





ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS

We are very proud of our academic record of success stretching back over many years at Sheldon.

The school has regularly appeared in the top quartile nationally for value-added results, both at GCSE and at A Level. This is supported by a broad and balanced curriculum through Key Stage 3 and GCSE, progressing to an extensive offer of subjects post-16, which enables students of all abilities to succeed. We place equal emphasis on all of our faculty areas and have received national recognition in many areas including sport, performing arts, science, design technology, internationalism and health promotion, all of which contributes to a rich experience and to excellent outcomes.





THE SHELDON SIXTH FORM

We very much see our work with students and partnership with parents extending to seven years, a significant majority of our students progressing to the Sixth Form for their final two years here.

Our high-performing Sixth Form offers a choice of over 30 different A Level and other Level 3 options. All students who apply to the Sixth Form have a subject choice discussion with a member of the Sixth Form team in order to ensure that students select the right combination of courses for them, whatever their ambitions and starting point.

Tutors remain a key support for Sixth Form students, seeing them twice a day and having time for one-to-one discussions built into their timetables. There is a detailed Personal Development programme delivered via tutor time that consists of four key strands: study and life-skills, post-18, wellbeing and SPMC (social, political, moral and community issues).

A wide variety of enrichment opportunities are also included in the package. All students are expected to give at least one lesson per week to doing something positive in their community. This could be supporting lower school students in school or any number of volunteering opportunities in the wider community. We call this project 5000 because it means that over 5000 hours of positive engagement in the community is generated each year. In addition there are a number of electives that students will choose from in order to broaden their skills and experience too. These include Ten Tors, The Duke of Edinburgh Award, Core Maths, the Extended Project Qualification, British Sign Language and Russian. (The electives on offer will vary from year to year and will be confirmed each September).

All students take part in Sixth Form games, designed to help promote not only health and fitness, but also social bonds across the Sixth Form. A comprehensive support package known as Sheldon Scholars is available to those students who are applying for highly competitive options beyond Sheldon.

A key feature of our Sixth Form is its focus on charity, which builds on the work seen in the lower school. Throughout the year students will organise events for awareness-raising and fundraising for local charities and bigger national projects. In the past this has included Strictly Sheldon (where Sixth Form couples take on the staff), a SuperMarioKart tournament and fancy dress events.



THE SCHOOL HAS GONE ABOVE AND BEYOND TO HELP MY SON IN HIS EDUCATION AND MAKE SURE NOTHING GETS IN THE WAY OF HIS LEARNING. TOP MARKS AND THANK YOU!"

YEAR 8 PARENT



ENSURING THAT PUPILS ARE HEALTHY PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY IS CENTRAL WITHIN ALL SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PRACTICES AND IS AN EXEMPLARY FEATURE IN THE SCHOOL."

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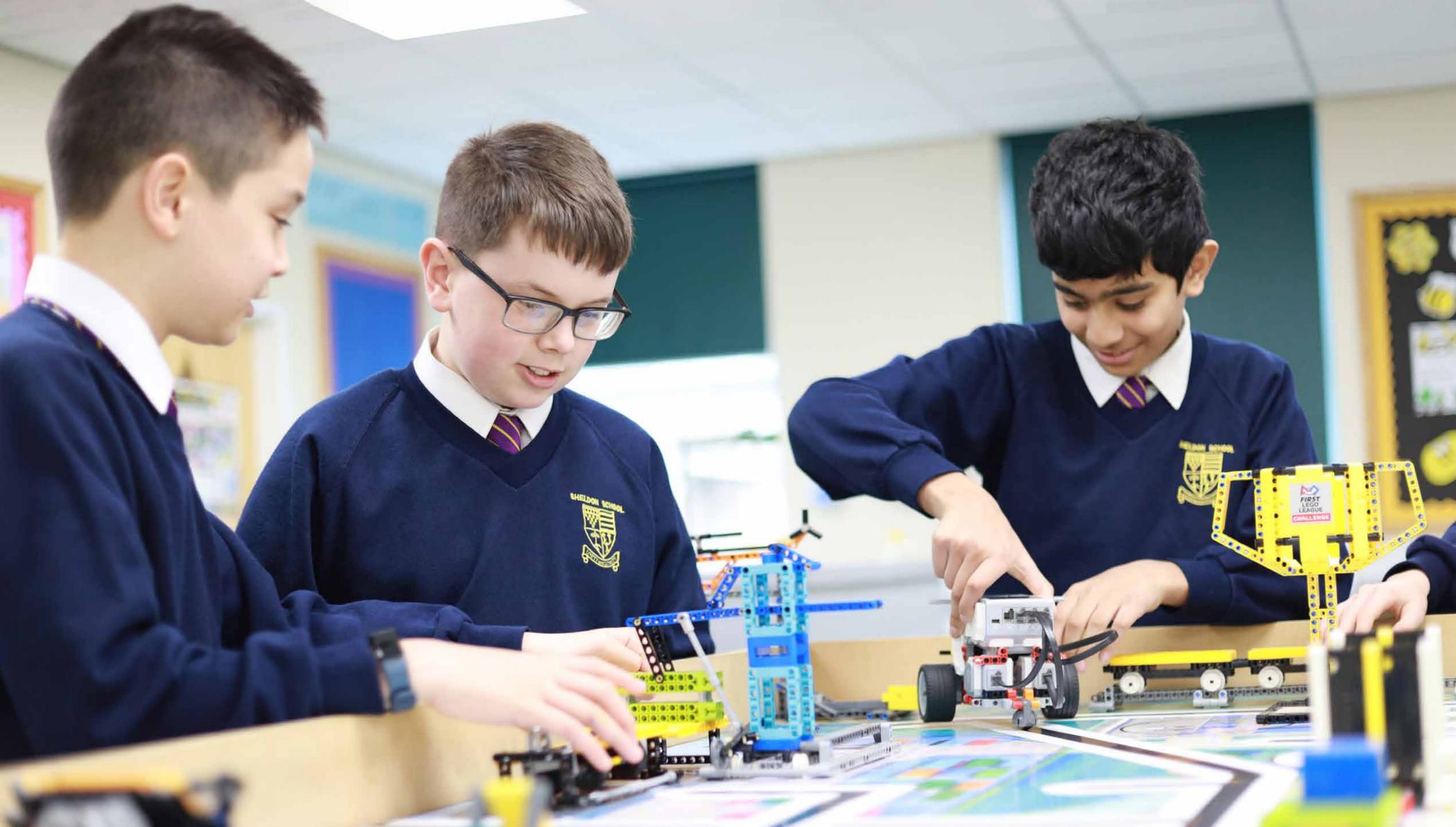
EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

We actively encourage students to take advantage of the wealth of opportunities available to them at Sheldon. After-school or lunchtime clubs include drama, art, craft, dance, photography, maths, chess, science, Warhammer, computing and Lego, as well as a large number of sports clubs and activities.

Students in Key Stage 4 are able to opt into various outdoor pursuits including climbing, canoeing, trekking and caving. In Year 10, they have the opportunity to visit Pencelli Outdoor Pursuits Centre for a week. A large number of students take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award and each year there is an impressive number of teams involved in the demanding Ten Tors Challenge. Public speaking is a

real strength and students consistently perform at the highest levels in local and national competitions.

The school's extremely high standards of music, drama and dance are reflected in regular concerts and productions, with the annual young musician of the year competition presenting an opportunity for soloists to showcase their talents. In addition to the school choir and orchestra, there is a wide range of ensembles including a jazz band.

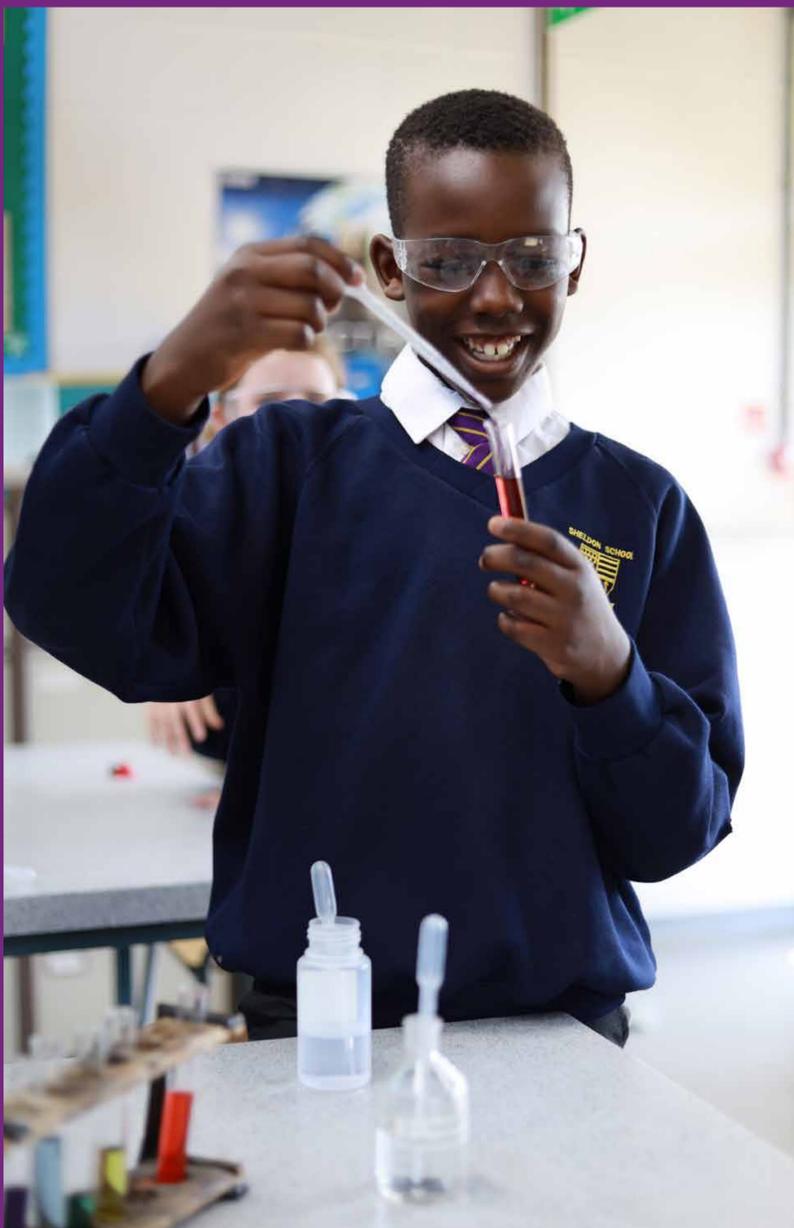


FACILITIES

Sheldon has excellent facilities in all areas of the school, both inside and out, with students enjoying the benefit of covered seating areas and stunning, well-maintained grounds at break and lunchtime.

Lessons take place in specialist and stimulating learning environments in faculties such as design technology, performing and expressive arts, physical education and science. Learning is supported through extensive suites of computers, wireless laptops and banks of iPads; in addition, the Apple Mac suite is available for students studying art, fashion and media.

Such facilities exemplify the importance we place on providing our students with high specification learning spaces and we are committed to continual enhancement and improvement. This extends to our six catering outlets, including our excellent Refectory at the centre of the school.





THE INDUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE NEW YEAR 7s IS OUTSTANDING. AFTER THE TURNAROUND WEEK, MY CHILD ENJOYED AN ANXIOUS FREE SUMMER AND COULDN'T WAIT TO START BACK IN SEPTEMBER. THE CAMP FURTHER CEMENTED NEW RELATIONSHIPS."

YEAR 7 PARENT



LIFE AFTER SHELDON

A significant proportion of students who stay at Sheldon for the full seven years go on to university.

Although many opt for a university in south-west England, ex-Sheldon students are spread right across the country, reading a wide variety of degrees from aerospace engineering, medicine and veterinary science to equine business management. We have enjoyed an excellent success rate with Oxbridge applications in recent years and also had students go on to top universities in the USA and Japan.

Many Sixth Form students take a gap year before, or after, university including enrolling on the prestigious 'Year in Industry' scheme.

For those who do not want to follow the university route, our independent careers advisor is on hand to help them search for a suitable apprenticeship or college based course. Increasingly, apprenticeships are seen as a very good alternative for students to progress to after A Levels. Again the range is wide, and we are always delighted when ex-students let us know of their successes, including those who have found fame in the arts and sporting arenas.

CHARITY AND FUNDRAISING

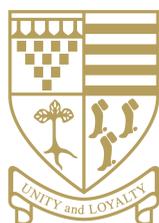
Thinking of, and supporting, less fortunate others is a strong feature of the ethos at Sheldon. Through participating in charity work, students learn to value, serve and enrich their community - an important philosophy for life.

An active, pupil-led whole school charity committee meets termly to organise and coordinate large events across the school and promote wider fundraising for local, national and international charities. In addition, charity fundraising is integral to the activities of every year group. Pupils make their own decisions for fundraising initiatives and all pupils play a part. Regular support of a child overseas has been a feature in several year groups, alongside many other worthwhile causes. It is a pleasure to witness the commitment, passion and leadership of our students in this area, with amounts in excess of £10,000 regularly raised each year.



PUPILS ARE KEEN TO SHARE THEIR ENTHUSIASM AND ENJOYMENT OF SCHOOL, REFLECTING THE PRINCIPLES YOU HAVE INSTILLED."

OFSTED 2017



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Chippenham



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