



4th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome back to Sheldon after the summer holiday. I am really excited about becoming as the new Headteacher and am looking forward to welcoming back all the students from Year 7-11 and Year 13 on Wednesday this week at the normal time of 8.30am. When students arrive they will be directed to their tutor bases, which they were shown in term 6. Year 12 students will start at 1pm on Wednesday for their induction with their tutor and will then start lessons on Thursday.

As you have hopefully read from the letters sent last year, we have made some changes to the uniform policy for this year, which are in keeping with the school's values of being inclusive and equitable. It would be great to ensure a smooth start to the term, with all students checking that they are meeting these expectations before they arrive in school. We don't want to start the term on a negative note by talking to students about wrong items of clothing or equipment. So, if you are unsure, please check the letter that was sent at the end of term 6 and again last week. This letter can also be found [here](#). I know that starting back can be nerve racking for all students, so hopefully this document can provide clarity and reassurance for parents and students.

During term 6, I met with students, parents, governors and staff to look at the School values and aims for the upcoming year. Essentially, we all wanted Sheldon to have a family feel where students feel safe and cared for, and where high-quality relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We all wanted to foster an environment where older students are role models to the younger students and help support them throughout school life. To reflect these changes, we have changed the School's values and mission statement. We hope that these values will permeate all aspects of school life, and you will see them reflected in our rewards and sanctions on Epraise this term.

Our vision

At Sheldon, we will be unapologetic in our approach to ensuring that every student can thrive regardless of social background, academic ability or special educational need, and that we give students a better chance of success than if they attended any other school.

We will pride ourselves on having the highest expectations of all students and staff. We will be passionate about working together with parents to ensure success for all our pupils.

We will be committed to providing a high-quality education that improves the life chances of all students. We will be kind, brave and will try our best at all times.

Our values

These are **Be kind, Be brave and Be the best you**.

This week we will be having two assemblies one from myself on these values and the other on the new behaviour system. Outlined below are some more details on these values and what this means in terms of the behaviours and actions we want students to demonstrate around school. Once we have shared the new behaviour policy with students and staff we will then share that with yourselves, so that you know what we are doing.

Be Kind – *the quality of being friendly and considerate*

- **Compassion** – showing empathy towards others
- **Gratitude** – being thankful and showing appreciation
- **Thoughtfulness** – showing consideration for the needs of other people

Be Brave – *the ability to act independently and make the right decisions without direction*

- **Reflective** – consideration of one's own actions
- **Confident** – owning your actions or decisions and making a positive contribution to lessons and school life
- **Duty** – a moral or legal obligation.

Be the best you – *trying your best to achieve success*

- **Ambition** – a strong desire to do or achieve something
- **Grit** – courage and resolve to see something through
- **Stamina** – the ability to sustain prolonged physical or mental effort

School priorities for 2023-24

I have reflected on the feedback from parental, staff voice, the school's own self evaluations and Ofsted's feedback from their last inspection and have set the School's priorities accordingly. These are:

1. To **improve behaviour and low-level disruption** in lessons. We have amended the School's behaviour policy to allow staff to do this and we will share this new approach with you after we have trained staff and students this week.
2. To **embed a Sheldon Teaching and Learning framework**, which incorporates the Teach Like a Champion Toolkit, which will improve the consistency of teaching and learning. This will include the setting and follow up to homework.
3. To ensure that all students, but particularly the **disadvantaged** (PP & SEN), achieve exceptional academic outcomes.
4. To establish and embed a whole school approach to disciplinary **literacy**.

I am very aware that Sheldon is a fantastic school and I am hoping that the changes we have made will make it even better. I look forward to meeting you all over the upcoming weeks and month and I will be putting on "**surgeries**" and "**drop-ins**" sessions this term to enable this to happen. I will release these dates and times in the upcoming weeks. But my email address is plynch@sheldonschool.co.uk, should you need to contact me at any point.

RAAC Concrete – good news!

Finally, you may have seen recent media coverage regarding **Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)** and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability. The Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and as a result areas in affected spaces have been closed.

In the last year we have been working with the DfE to check our buildings for RAAC. As you may be aware Sheldon has some buildings that were constructed in the post-war era that could have been affected by the use of RAAC. However, currently after initial checks, it does not seem to affect us as a School in terms of their construction. We will continue to work with the DfE and will be guided by them.

Should there be any change in our circumstances we will let you know immediately, and we will always take decisions that prioritise the safety of our pupils, staff and community.

Some other general reminders; you should have received a letter updating you on the changes to Student Services and the installation of an automatic entrance barrier. A copy of that letter can be found [here](#).

Hot weather – Uniform; due to the predicted hot weather over the next three days, please can you remind your child to ensure that they have a hat, sunscreen and plenty of water. Students are not required to wear their school jumper. Tailored shorts are permitted.

A couple of important dates for the first couple of weeks of term: Year 12 photos on Wednesday 6th and Year 7 and 9 photos on Friday 15th, Year 13 DofE Gold qualifying expedition 14th-17th September and Year 7 camp the week commencing 18th September.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Lynch', written in a cursive style.

Peter Lynch
Headteacher