



19<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Dear Parents,

This term is rattling along with lots going on; a real sense of normality is beginning to pervade and I hope that this will continue throughout the summer and set us up nicely for a routine year from September 2022. There is plenty of time before then of course, but it is good to look ahead with real optimism.

## **Examinations**

One of the normal features to return is that of a full set of public examinations, following two years of centre- and teacher-assessed grades. For both sets of students, whether it be GCSE or A Level, this will represent a new experience, and for the Year 11s, theirs have already begun in earnest. They have approached their revision really sensibly and on their last full day in school on Tuesday, they had a lovely barbeque, followed by one final assembly to celebrate their time here. The timetable for examinations is an intense one over the coming weeks and I need to reiterate that Year 11 students who wish to study in between examinations can still go to classes they would have had at that time to receive input for their subjects until half term. After half term, there will be a daily room timetable published to advise where students can work if they would prefer to do that instead of going home. The first week's room timetable will be sent by School Comms before we break up.

Year 13, too, have ramped up their revision, and tomorrow we will be saying goodbye to them with a whole host of activities to mark their time at Sheldon. Both year groups have events lined up later in the summer to get together for one last time, but in the meantime, we wish them well and hope they get the results that their efforts would merit.

## **CCTV**

In the recent parental survey, a couple of comments were made about security within the school and the need for enhancing our CCTV coverage. I am pleased to say that we are updating our spread of cameras to ensure we have far fewer blind spots around the school, as well as making sure the quality of image is far clearer. It is vitally important that our students feel safe around the school and this is one way in which we can support them in that regard. Mrs Julia Finch, our School Business Manager, is overseeing the implementation of the upgrade, so if you have any comments or queries, please email her on [jdfinch@sheldonschool.co.uk](mailto:jdfinch@sheldonschool.co.uk)

## **Car Park**

From time to time, I need to remind parents and Sixth Form students that the car park is for staff and visitors only. We simply do not have enough space on site to accommodate any more and recently, one of our staff members who was coming to work later in the day had to park along Hardenhuish Lane and walk in. We also ask that parents who collect their children by car wait away from school and have their children walk a few minutes to be taken home; this is to keep the flow of traffic as smooth as possible and also to minimise the chance of any accidents happening. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Hardenhuish Lane, Chippenham, Wilts. SN14 6HJ

**Headteacher:** Neil Spurdell BSc (Hons)

**Tel:** 01249 766020 **Fax:** 01249 766030

**Email:** [admin@sheldonschool.co.uk](mailto:admin@sheldonschool.co.uk) **Web:** [www.sheldonschool.co.uk](http://www.sheldonschool.co.uk)



## **Music and Dance**

Our returning to normal has been demonstrated in the running of a number of events that had become part of the Sheldon staple until just over two years ago. Within Performing Arts, in successive weeks we hosted the Young Musician of the Year competition and a dance show, both of which the assembled audiences thoroughly enjoyed. The standard of musicianship and dance was superb – and for those leaving the school this summer, it was a real highlight to bow out on.

## **Languages**

Two weeks ago we hosted 30 students and staff from Buenos Aires with our Year 10 Spanish classes enjoying the opportunity to find out about life in Argentina. We very much hope to build on this partnership and, as we look ahead to introducing Spanish with students from Year 7 in September, it is good to know that our Argentinian visitors are already planning to come back. Whilst we haven't organised a return visit, we are very much looking forward to overseas trips happening again next year even if they are a bit closer to home.

Continuing the languages theme, ahead of the real thing last Saturday, the MFL Club had a great turnout for their annual Eurovision Party one night after school last week. Students enjoyed watching the semi-finals whilst colouring, painting and scoring the performances. Quite a surprise to see it followed with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place for the UK in the competition, something I thought I would never see again in my lifetime!

## **Record success in Maths Challenges**

133 Year 7 and 8 pupils took the Junior Maths challenge before the Easter holidays, with results now in: 80 pupils received a certificate of high achievement, which is a tremendous return. Nine pupils achieved a Gold certificate and two qualified for the extremely demanding next stage – the Junior Kangaroo. Congratulations to all those who took part.

## **PE triumphs**

It has been a great start to the summer term in PE with athletics, tennis, rounders and softball clubs in full swing every week. A reminder that the clubs list is available outlining the times and days if any students fancy coming along who haven't yet done so. At the recent Stephanie Millward swimming gala there were some fantastic individual performances, and on the athletics field, no fewer than 25 students have qualified for the County Championships to be held in Swindon on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Special mention amongst our swimmers should go to Poppy Williams in Year 9 who has been selected to compete in the British Championships – we wish her and all of our athletes well.

## **Ten Tors and DofE**

Glorious sunshine welcomed our three teams across the line in Dartmoor the weekend before last after completing 35 or 45 miles over two days. This is always a huge accomplishment and the students should be incredibly proud of what they achieved, not only in managing the event itself, but in showing the determination and dedication to undertake the months of training necessary to be in a position to undertake the challenge in the first place.

This week we also celebrated the achievements of 32 successful DofE students who have completed Bronze, making a total of 84 in this academic year. More students set out last weekend as they embarked on their practice towards their Bronze Award, with an additional 30 working towards Silver and an impressive 18 on Gold. Two students – Rose Gawthorpe and Emily Williamson in Year 13 – deserve special praise, having completed their Gold; they are now waiting for their invite to the palace!

### **DT Enrichment**

Fashion and Textiles students recently visited Harry Potter Warner Bros Studios to take part in a costume design workshop in which they saw first-hand how costume designers created original ideas for the Harry Potter movie franchise; they were also able to apply their own ideas using a wide range of fabrics and fibres. The trip was a big hit for everyone who attended, including the staff lucky enough to go. Within Year 12, 'sustainability' has been at the forefront of students' thinking: donated denim from former Sheldon staff and students has been utilised in redesigning and re-working old clothing into innovative fashionable items. It will be exciting to see the results and, who knows, we may see one of them on the Great British Sewing Bee one day!

### **Architecture Project Presentations**


GCSE Graphic Products students recently presented their Chippenham architectural development ideas to a local architect. After visiting the site and researching the needs of the public, students explored designs and modelled their ideas. The class received some amazing feedback about how thoughtful, sustainable, and well-researched their plans were, but through the process they really developed their designing skills, with some even producing professional-looking CAD visuals. Two of several examples that I could have included are below:



So, you can see it has been a busy three weeks or so, with more to come next week until a well-earned half term break. For everyone, that will include two days' public holiday to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which I hope gives you time to take a break and the chance possibly to join in with some celebrations.

Yours faithfully,

*Neil Spurdell*



Neil Spurdell  
**Headteacher**