



16th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a rather wet Term 2 here at Sheldon and across Chippenham, and I hope that the floods haven't damaged your property or led to too much disruption over the recent weeks. After closing the school due to lack of water, lack of electricity and now too much water, I am starting to worry for what Term 3 will bring!

On the positive side, this has been another great term, with staff and students being extremely busy and getting into the festive spirit. If you would like to see regular updates on what students are doing, please ensure you are following our [Facebook page](#). But for those of you that don't access social media, please read the Sheldon Standard that comes out at the beginning of each term as this newsletter shares all these amazing achievements and events.

We've had a fantastic term filled with visits from the BBC and Points West, who have been following the progress of our Ten Tors team as they prepare for their event this summer. They also joined us during our Children in Need fundraising events, showcasing the incredible efforts of our students. Through cake sales, non-uniform day, sports events, quizzes, and the ever-popular "sponge the teacher," the students raised an impressive £2,076.66. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed—your support and enthusiasm have made a real difference!

Student survey summary

Below are some of the key findings from our student survey conducted this term, which received an impressive 1,191 responses. We are delighted to report an improvement in nearly all areas compared to last year's survey. However, two areas were identified as needing attention, and these will be our focus over the coming terms:

1. **Movement between lessons:** Students highlighted challenges with transitioning between lessons, particularly due to our narrow corridors and older buildings. We are developing a plan to address this issue in terms 3 and 4.
2. **Perceptions of consequences for unkind behaviour:** Some students feel that the consequences for unkind behaviour are not effective enough or clearly communicated. We are reviewing our approach to sanctions and exploring how we can better communicate the outcomes of follow-ups with students, so they feel more assured.

Questions	November 2024	January 2024
I enjoy my lessons and think the teaching is good	86% agree	55%
There is an adult I can talk to if something is worrying me	81% agree	62%
The behaviour of other pupils in my lessons is good	83% agree	45%
The behaviour of other pupils around the school is good	75% agree	32%
The lanyard system has improved the condition of toilets	69% agree	No comparison
Students having balls to play with at break and lunch is a good thing	92% agree	No comparison
The new transparent reward system is a good thing	92% agree	No comparison
I feel safe when I am at school	90% agree	92%
My school encourages me to look after my physical health	78% agree	57%

My school encourages me to look after my emotional and mental health	81% agree	59%
I have attended a club, volunteered for something, gone on a trip or taken part in a school performance this year	71% agree	56%
My school has opportunities for me to be independent and take responsibility	88% agree	87%
My school encourages me to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally	94% agree	93%
My school provides me with information about future opportunities (careers)	86% agree	83%
I would recommend this school	81% agree	73%

Be Kind

We are proud to continue supporting local charities and giving back to our community, especially during this time of year. The Sixth Form leadership team has been actively fundraising for the local scout group, whose buildings and equipment were severely damaged by recent flooding, while also raising money for the homeless charity *Doorway*. Meanwhile, our lower school students have embraced the spirit of giving through our Reverse Advent event. Unlike a traditional advent calendar where one receives a daily treat, this initiative focuses on giving back. This year, the school collected a variety of items to donate to local food banks, creating care parcels for families facing financial challenges. A heartfelt thank you goes to Mr. Wolff (Head of Year 9) and Miss Owen (Head of Year 7) for their dedication in organising this initiative.

Be Brave

Our Year 7 students braved the wind and rain to visit the German Christmas Market in Birmingham. There, they had the chance to practise their German language skills while sampling some of the amazing food on offer. The group received numerous compliments from stallholders on their excellent behaviour and conduct. Well done to all for representing the school with such pride and good manners!

Term two ended on a high note with two wonderful events: the Christmas music concert and the school production. This year, our students shone on stage, performing Christmas songs and carols or delighting audiences with the hilarious production of *Wendy and Peter Pan*. A huge thank you to the Performance and Expressive Arts Faculty for organising these incredible opportunities, encouraging our students to be brave and showcase their talents.

Be the best you

Year 12 Parliament Trip

Earlier this week, our Year 12 Politics students travelled to London to visit Parliament. This annual trip at Sheldon Sixth Form allows students to learn from the heart of British government. During the visit, they had the opportunity to meet with our local MP, Sarah Gibson, who previously visited Sheldon during our General Election Hustings last summer. Two of our students, Ellie and Maddie, have provided a written account of their experience, which you can read [here](#).

Christmas lectures at Oxford for Science students

On the 10 December, we took our Year 9 scientists to the Oxford Natural History Museum for the Christmas Lectures. The first lecture was on apex predators in the Amazon and the second talk was about secrets from the prehistoric world with lots of interesting facts about the dinosaurs and the role of palaeontologists. It was a wonderful way for our students to experience science outside of the classroom and expand their scientific knowledge.

Term 2 Sporting successes

It has been an outstanding term for extracurricular sport at Sheldon, with exceptional participation from students across all year groups. We've been particularly impressed with the consistent attendance at clubs and the enthusiasm shown by pupils representing the school.

Girls' PE Highlights

The Year 7 netball team had an incredible undefeated season, culminating in their well-deserved title as area champions. Our Year 8 and 9 teams also delivered impressive performances. The Year 8 team secured second place in their area tournament, while the Year 9 team lost just one closely contested match all season. In football, the U16 girls' team displayed phenomenal skill, scoring four times as many goals as they conceded. A standout moment was their emphatic 7-2 victory over Lydiard Park. Meanwhile, our KS4 badminton girls triumphed in their area tournament and are now through to the county finals next term.

Boys' PE Highlights

This term marked the introduction of an exciting inter-school varsity series with Hardenhuish. Each year group is competing in a three-match 'Test Series,' starting with rugby. As we approach the final games, keeping the competition on a knife-edge.

In rugby tournaments, our Year 7 and 8 teams secured second place, while the Year 9 team took the top spot. The National Cup football competition saw some notable success, with teams progressing to round 3 and the Year 8 team making it as far as round 5 before being narrowly defeated by last year's quarter-finalists. In the County Cup, all teams advanced past the first round, with the Year 8 team determined to defend their title in the next stages after Christmas. Sheldon also celebrated a significant win in the annual area cross-country championships, bringing home the trophy to sit alongside the area athletics trophy from the summer – a remarkable double achievement!

Additional Highlights

Our sports leaders and ambassadors have shone this term, dedicating their time and effort to supporting the PE faculty in organising events. The primary school tough mudder and cross-country events were particular highlights, showcasing their leadership and organisational skills. Year 11 core PE students completed a netball leaders' module, culminating in delivering sessions to Year 5 pupils at a local primary school – a fantastic experience for all involved. Finally, our Sixth Form Varsity saw fierce competition last week, with the Year 13s crowned champions after excelling in netball, badminton, volleyball, football, and hockey after beating Year 12.

Term 3 PE clubs will kick off on January 13th, and we can't wait to see what our students achieve next!

General information

Year 9 Options information Evening

Year 9 students will soon make important decisions about the subjects they wish to study in Years 10 and 11. These choices will shape the curriculum each student will follow during their next two years at Sheldon School. To support you and your child in making these decisions, we will be holding an Options Information Evening for students and parents/carers on Thursday, 23rd January, at the school. Further details will be shared at the start of Term 3.

Year 11 Parents evening Tuesday 7th January

This year, we are trialling a new approach by holding a parents' evening at the end of the INSET day on 7th January. This timing is intended to provide staff with additional preparation time for the meetings. If you haven't already booked an appointment, please do so via School Cloud [here](#). For login assistance, click [here](#). The evening will provide an opportunity to review your child's recent in-class mock exams, discuss access arrangements, clarify coursework deadlines, and explore how to make the most of the *Revision Olympics*

resources in preparation for the formal mocks in Term 4. These mocks will take place from 24th February over two weeks and are designed to replicate the summer exams exactly.

Year 11 and 13 Revision Olympics

All students have been given instructions via assemblies and lessons, on how to use the revision Olympics resources, which is essentially a step-by-step approach on how and what to revise for each subject. The approach goes from now all the way to their mock in February and then towards the summer examinations. All resources can be found [here](#) on our website.

If you want to support your child, please ask them to complete each subject task each week, there are also revision timetables and advice on how to structure their revision on the website [here](#).

Arrangements for the last day of term

As a reminder, school will finish at 12:35pm on Friday, 20th December, for the Christmas break. Coachstyle has confirmed that they can provide transport at this earlier time. However, please note that all Faresaver buses and the Coachstyle Service 99 will operate at their usual pick-up time of 3:00pm.

To accommodate this, we kindly ask parents to make arrangements for their children to be collected at 12:35pm, where possible. If you are unable to do this and require your child(ren) to be supervised in school until 3.00pm, please complete the form below by 3pm on Wednesday 18th December: <https://forms.office.com/e/uLggdRBPUz>

Christmas Jumper and Christmas Dinner Day 18th December

This Wednesday is our Christmas Jumper and Christmas Dinner Day. Students are encouraged to make a £1 donation during tutor time, with all proceeds going to our two chosen charities this year. Please note that students should wear their full Sheldon uniform, replacing only their school jumper with a Christmas jumper. Booking for the Christmas lunch is now closed. Details about the timings for the Christmas lunchtime will be shared in tutor time. Each student will have a 15-minute slot in the refectory with their year group.

Goodbye to our Chair of Governors

After nine incredible years of service to Sheldon School, including five as our outstanding Chair of Governors, we bid farewell to Louise Carver as she embarks on an exciting new chapter in Scotland. Louise's leadership, dedication and compassion have left an indelible mark on our school. We wish her all the best in her new adventure!

Thank you again for all your support this term, from me and the all the staff at the school. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and we will see you all on Wednesday 8th January.

Best wishes



Pete Lynch
Headteacher

Sheldon School Term Dates 2024 – 2025

Academic year begins	Mon 2 September 2024	SDD Days School Open for staff Mon/Tues 6-7 Jan 2025 Fri 4 Apr 2025 SDD DAYS School Closed Mon 2 Dec 2024
Christmas holiday	Fri 20 December 2024 (finish 12.35pm) – Tues 7 January 2025	
February half term	Mon 17 February 2025 – Fri 21 February 2025	
Easter holiday	Fri 4 April 2025 – Mon 21 April 2025	
Half term break	Mon 26 May 2025 – Fri 30 May 2025	
Summer term ends	Fri 18 July 2025 school finishes 12.35pm	

<p>Year 13 Revision Evening Weds 15 Jan 2025</p> <p>Year 9 Options Evening Thurs 23 Jan 2025</p> <p>Open Mornings 30 Jun-01 Jul 2025</p> <p>Year 6 Open Evening Weds 2 Jul 2025</p>	<p>Parents' Evenings Years 7-9 - 4:00pm – 6:30pm (f2f) Year 7 L side Tues 22 Apr 2025 Year 7 R side Thurs 01 May 2025 Year 8 L side Tues 06 Mar 2025 Year 8 R side Tues 11 Mar 2025 Year 9 L side Tues 28 Jan 2025 Year 9 R side Mon 03 Feb 2025</p> <p>Years 10-13 – 3:45pm – 6:45pm (f2f) Year 10 Thurs 13 Feb 2025 Year 11 Tues 07 Jan 2025 Year 12 Thurs 19 Jun 2025 Year 13 Tues 01 Apr 2025</p> <p>Year 12 Parent Information Evenings Post-18 options Tues 10 Jun 2025</p> <p>New Year 7 Parents' Evening Thurs 10 Jul 2025 6-9pm</p>	<p>Year 11 and 13 Mocks (Sports Hall) w/c 24 February 2025 w/c 03 March 2025</p> <p>Year 8 & 10 Assessment Weeks w/c 13 January 2025 w/c 20 January 2025</p> <p>Year 10 & 12 Mock Weeks (Sports Hall) w/c 28 April 2025 w/c 05 May 2025</p> <p>Year 7, 8 & 9 Assessment Weeks w/c 16 June 2025 w/c 23 June 2025</p>	<p>Year 10 Work Experience Weeks Week beginning 16 June 2025 Week beginning 23 June 2025</p> <p>Year 12 Work Experience Week Week beginning 07 July 2025</p> <p>Year 11 Prom Thurs 19 June 2025</p> <p>Year 13 Ball Tues 01 July 2025</p> <p>Summer Concert Tues 15 Jul 2025</p>
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