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Sturminster Newton High School

From the Headteacher

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I remember writing this time last year that it had been the strangest year of my time in teaching, but I now have to amend that to 'the strangest two years'. As the term ends, I would like to say a huge thank you and well done to all students, staff and parents for managing the unexpected, dealing with disruption and being so adaptable and resilient as changes piled up, often at very short or no notice. A dominating factor of the term was, of course, the assessments for students doing public exams, mainly in Years 11 and 13, to inform teacher assessed grades. The students coped magnificently with the changes, as they have done throughout and staff were superb in the setting, marking, moderation and submission of work which was clearly a huge quantity of extra labour.

It was a shame that our Year 6 induction day had to be cancelled again due to restrictions, but a summer school for Year 6 is taking place in August and we will be running their induction day in September. As the weather has improved, we have run a number of the trips that have been so sadly lacking from the last two academic years and students have been to Splashdown, Studland and, as I write, activities are taking place as tasters of our enrichment programme next year.

Years 11 and 13 enjoyed some fantastic leavers' events, which we relocated to be on site as the venues were shut by restrictions. The students had a very enjoyable time and as ever their conduct was exemplary; my sincere thanks to all the staff involved in organising and overseeing the events. Sports Day was also a very enjoyable and hard fought contest, adapted this year so students spectated and cheered in year groups rather than house bubbles. The Sixth Form have benefitted from a very enjoyable enterprise week, using the business experience from the community to develop their knowledge and skills for the future and I would like to thank all members of

the community who gave of their time and expertise so generously. Over the summer we have a lot of building work taking place on site, with the refurbishment of the Art and Science rooms and a surface refurbishment of the courts.

We say goodbye to a number of staff this year as they move on to new chapters in their lives: Mr Weeks, Mr Clarke, Mr Jones, Mrs Gray, Mrs Shelley, Miss Briggs, Mr Kellaway, Mr King, Mrs Carter and Mrs Guy. Many, most notably Mr Weeks, have given years of service to the school and we wish them all success and happiness as they go on to new things. We also welcome a number of new staff in September; Miss Osbourne will be joining us to teach Music, Mrs Collins to teach English and Psychology, Ms Mount to teach English, Mr West to teach Science and as Head of Year and Mrs Cavalier-Hirth and Mrs Phipps to teach RE. I would like to extend a warm welcome to them all and look forward to them joining us at SNHS.

As a final reflection on the year, I would like to again reiterate my gratitude to students, staff and parents who have worked so hard and been so supportive during all the upheaval and who have learnt to expect the unexpected. It would be nice to think that this may be all over bar the shouting, but the last two years and recent events may suggest that next year could still be disrupted in some way and it would be wise to be prepared for this. I am confident that the strength, good humour and determination of students, staff and the community means we can hope for the best but be prepared for the worst.



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YEAR 11 LEAVERS' ASSEMBLY



On Thursday 27th May, Year 11 got together for their final assembly and farewells.

As they swarmed into the hall for shirt signing, there was lots of laughter and smiles. There was much positive energy in the room and such an outpouring of emotions. Staff were inundated with requests - Mr McManus was overwhelmed with shirt requests as soon as he walked in and Mr Henley had set up a conveyor belt for all the requests he had from students to sign their shirts. It was a wonderful sight.



Then the excitement died down, students sat and munched on the free chocolates on their seats and prepared for speeches from their tutors. Mr Brown, Mr McManus, Mr Henley and Mr Harrison all said a few words about their tutor group and then presented each tutee with a special certificate as a way to mark how they will be remembered.



There was lots of generosity amongst the students as well as spontaneous cheers at times.



It was concluded with a teary goodbye from myself and a video of events that they have taken part in over the last 5 years.

It has been hard work but an honour and a pleasure. This year group are full of bright, intelligent and caring individuals who are about to embark on the next stage of their lives. We wish them all the best and look forward to seeing them on Results Day.





YEAR 11 LEAVERS' BALL

It is fair to say that most of Year 11 were anxiously waiting for Wednesday 23rd June. Would the weather be nice? How will I arrive in style? What will I wear?

The Leavers' Ball is a landmark moment for Year 11 students as they complete their GCSEs and embark on the next stage of their education. But this year was going to be different. Due to COVID restrictions, the students were not expecting to be able to have such a celebration. But to have a special night of festivities purely for them and to have it on the school site seemed only fitting after this last year of disappointments.

At 6.15pm, the cars, limos, historic vehicles (and even a horse and trap) arrived on site bringing the students in all their finery. It was amazing to see them all dressed up, looking older than their years and so proud of what they had accomplished. It was also an honour to have parents turn up to see their children arrive and take photos of them with their friends. This all added to the atmosphere of the occasion and the community feel around the school.

By 7.00pm, the students were having their formal photographs taken and starting to partake in the food on offer. Pizza and burgers went down well within a relaxed festival atmosphere. Lots of mingling, conversations and laughter rippled around the marquee and Sixth Form Centre. This was a chance for them all to be together again before they go their separate ways to colleges, apprenticeships or staying here at SNHS for the Sixth Form. It was also a chance for them to catch up with their teachers (past and present) who had been on the journey with them and the mutual respect that was shown throughout the evening was heart-warming.

By 9.00pm, the students were relaxed, eating ice creams, and getting into the party spirit with the right tunes playing. By 10.00pm we had to finally let them go home - with cameras full of photographs and minds full of memories.

After five years of secondary school, it was a chance for them to celebrate the highs and lows, the friendships, and their futures. I was honoured to be their Head of Year for the duration of their time at SNHS and seeing them all have fun on such a special evening is a memory that will stay with me forever.

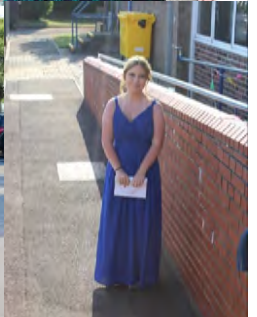
Thanks to the businesses who helped make the evening such a special event, as well as all the staff who helped set it up, the staff who came to assist in the evening or just stopped by to catch up with the students.

Goodbye Class of 2021; we wish you all the best of luck!





YEAR 11 LEAVERS BALL





INAUGURAL LAUNCH OF THE COMPUTING DEPARTMENT'S NEW DRONE



Y13 Computer Scientists, Matt, Darren & Krystian tested the new Tello DJI Ryze drone in the hall. They connected the drone to the laptop and used a python script of code to command the drone to do different tasks, such as move in the direction of arrows pressed on the keyboard, or do front flips and record videos. It was a great learning experience since the script used multiple different python libraries such as djitello and pygame to achieve these tasks.

GCE Results (A Levels)
9am - 10am
Tuesday 10th August

GCSE/Level 2 Results
(Years 11 & 12 only)
9.00am - 10.00am
Thursday 12th August

6th Form Registration Day - 12th August
The Sixth Form Team will be available to
discuss your future plans



DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD

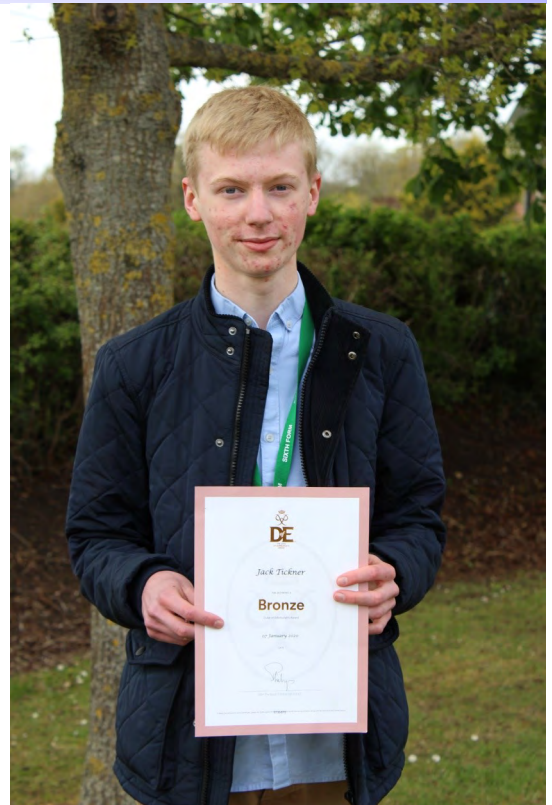
We would like to congratulate Jack on receiving his Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, a brilliant achievement! Jack has written a piece for us explaining what he had to do to gain this award:

The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award consists of three independent experiences - volunteering, doing a sports activity, and trying something creative - and then the expedition, completed as part of a team. Two of the three independent activities must last for at least three months, while the third activity must be done for six months, and all three must be done for at least one hour per week.

I chose to do my volunteering section at the Old Rectory care home in Stalbridge between Summer 2018 until January 2019. I then did creative writing for my creative section for three months, and hiking for my sports section. I had recently completed the Ten Tors when I started the Duke of Edinburgh award, and I had wanted to continue hiking as a means of staying active and discovering new routes and trails both in the local area and further afield.

The expedition took place in October 2019, following a practice expedition in the summer. In a team of six, our group spent two days hiking along a route that we had planned ourselves. Our team began in Stalbridge on the Saturday morning, and walked to Lydlinch by way of a public footpath through Thornhill Farm. From Lydlinch, we went to the Stock Gaylard estate, where we pitched tents and cooked; on Sunday morning, we packed our tents away and hiked to Sturminster Newton. During the expedition, the weather was not bad for the time of year and I cannot remember how far the team walked, however, finishing the expedition marked the completion of my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

Although a Duke of Edinburgh award takes a lot of time and commitment, I would definitely recommend it, as it is a useful experience that will give anyone who takes part something to talk about in job or university interviews.



YEAR 11 THORPE PARK TRIP

On Monday 21st June, a small group of Year 11 students decided to brave the hideous rain and go to Thorpe Park for some rollercoaster rollicking fun!

Despite some hold-ups at the beginning, they entered the park and headed straight for the rides that they wanted to conquer. Although waiting times were consistently long, that did not deter our brave adventurers who were determined to do as many rides as they could - as were some of the teachers!

It was a lovely group of students who made the most of a day of fun and were excellent ambassadors for the school.





PROGRESSION DAY 2021

We were delighted by an amazing turnout to our Sixth Form Taster Day. After the end of year celebrations at the Prom it was lovely to welcome back into school all those students returning to continue their studies in the Sixth Form next year.

Everyone had the opportunity to get a “taste” of the post-16 options they had chosen, confirming these to be the right choice for their next two years of study. Staff gave an introduction to and outline of each course, provided bespoke study guides for their subjects and set summer transition work to help students make a flying start in September.

The day ended with a fabulous barbecue, supported by expert chefs from the community. Not only did the rain hold off but we even enjoyed a few rays of sunshine as proceedings drew to a close.

We're very grateful to our volunteers for running the barbecue but sorry not to have been able to extend the invitation to those students who will be joining us from other schools next year due to Covid-19 restrictions. We very much look forward to welcoming everyone for the Sixth Form induction day on Friday 3rd September.





EMPLOYER MENTORING

Sturminster Newton High School has been delighted to welcome several local employers and employees who have offered their services to mentor Year 10 students. These mentors have a wide range of knowledge and experience from their own working lives and act as a sounding board to students across all aspects of employment, future careers and getting the most out of their time at school.

With the current global situation, it has become more important than ever for school students to have the opportunity to focus on personal and career development and the mentors' experiences are helping to expand the students' engagement both with school and their own futures.

All the mentors have undergone training from Ansbury Guidance and meet up with their students regularly to inspire and motivate them as they move into their final year of GCSEs and begin to consider their future.

Sturminster Newton High School is very grateful for the mentors' enthusiasm and commitment and the positive benefits already being seen by the students. The school thanks all of our mentors, some pictured here, for giving up their time to support our students.



LIBRARY NEWS

Although we have been closed to students this year, we have still been busy in the Library as the introduction of the Accelerated Reader programme required our books to be 'stickered' with the relevant quiz and book level information.

After half term, we opened to Year 7 during their lunch breaks and were pleased to welcome students for browsing, reading in the comfy chairs and general study at the tables.



We congratulate Kameron, a Year 9 student, for being the LRC Star Borrower 2020-21. Kameron used the online booking system and delivery service to great effect, borrowing over 30 books during the course of the year.

Finally, we are pleased to be able to say we have added a whole range of new books to the Library catalogue. These will be on display when we return so come and check them out. Have a lovely summer and happy reading!





YEAR 13 LEAVERS BALL

This term Year 13 students said goodbye at their Leavers' Ball.

The evening was an outstanding success, amazing food, superb music, a fun bouncy castle, colourful décor & lights all helped to create a wonderful, festival atmosphere that the students thoroughly enjoyed. Topped off with a stunning fireworks display, the "Ball" was a marvellous send-off for a year group who have been a pleasure throughout their Sixth Form journey.

Thank you to everyone involved in making the evening a success and for the support that the students and the school received.





CANCER RESEARCH UK HEAD SHAVE

During this term we were very proud that one of our students, Millie, took the decision to shave her head in order to fund raise for Cancer Research UK, a cause that she felt is so close to so many people's hearts. In Millie's words:

'I made the decision to shave my head for Cancer Research UK. In 2018, I sadly lost my grandad to prostate cancer and ever since, I have wanted to try to help others by raising some money. The sad reality is that nowadays many families are affected by cancer in some way.'

In the hope that they could help Millie meet or even exceed her fundraising target, Mr Davis, our Headteacher, and Mr Harris, our Deputy Headteacher, decided to join Millie and have their heads shaved in support.

On Friday 11th June Millie, Mr Davis and Mr Harris braved the shave in front of students and staff. There was a huge amount of encouragement and support in school and during the shave Millie's hair was collected so that it could be donated to the Little Princess Trust, a charity that provides free real hair wigs to young cancer sufferers.

A terrific amount was raised from the charity head shave. Millie collected £395.00 in sponsorship and £797.00 on her personal link, the school's Just Giving page collected £750.00; a grand total of: **£1942.00!!!** Thank you to everyone that donated and supported this event.





GUINEA PIG UPDATE

The SEND department at Sturminster Newton High School have recruited new volunteers in the form of two guinea pigs. All of the names that were put forward by students were placed in a hat, names were drawn, and Nibbles and Dottie were chosen.

Having animals to care for helps children with emotional and social needs. They can help to build empathy, care, love, compassion, understanding, commitment and confidence. For some children, it will be their only contact with a pet as they don't have them at home.

Since arriving at school the guinea pigs have been a huge success with staff and students and the benefit of having them in school can already be seen.



MATHS CHALLENGE

This term a group of Year 7 and Year 8 students took part in the Maths Challenge . Mr Findlay our Head of Maths presented their certificates to them. It was great to see how well they did and how much they all enjoyed the challenge.





YEAR AWARDS

This term we were so pleased to be able to celebrate and recognise a few of our Year 7 - 10 students. Students that had achieved a year award for either achievement or effort were invited to a socially distanced assembly in the hall where Mr Davis presented their awards.



YEAR 12 AWARDS

At the end of what has undoubtedly been one of the most challenging years of recent times we were delighted to take a step out of the melee of assessment and Covid-related activities to celebrate the extraordinary success of some of our Year 12 students. Awards for effort and achievement in each subject area were presented by Mr Davis in the main hall. Whilst a far cry from the gathering of students, staff, parents and the community that we traditionally enjoy for this event, there was a lovely relaxed and positive atmosphere. It was a real pleasure to recognise the hard work and achievement of so many students and we look forward to their further success in the year ahead.





STUDENT YEAR APPOINTMENT - SIXTH FORM

This term we were delighted to reach the culmination of the process through which appointments were made to the new Student Year Team.

Students had to write a letter of application and then successful applicants presented their ideas in a hustings speech to their peers. Appointments to the posts were then subject to completion of a successful interview and are as follows:

- Ellie - Head Girl
- Billy – Head Boy
- Jack – Charities and Communities Officer
- Ted – Student Engagement Officer
- Harrison – Sports Officer
- Max – Sports Officer

The team meet weekly to discuss ideas, allocate tasks and move forward with the planning of initiatives and events. We have been hugely impressed by the range of ideas discussed so far and have high hopes that they will enjoy an interruption-free year in which to bring these to fruition. The team are looking forward to meeting students in Years 7-10 in the coming weeks and representing their views in the year ahead.



FOOD BANK COLLECTION

During this term we held a charity day in school. Students were asked to bring in and donate items for The Vale Pantry. The amount of donations received was amazing, so much that two cars had to make the delivery. A fantastic effort from the students and their families to support the local Pantry and the hard work that they do.





ENTERPRISE CHALLENGE

As part of our Progression Week programme Year 12 students participated in the *Enterprise Challenge*, run by Young Enterprise. Over the course of two intense days, students formed a company, devised, created and marketed a product. Towards the end of the second day they produced a trade stand to procure sales, promoting their product to students and staff across the school as well as pitching their ideas to local business leaders in a nerve-racking *Dragon's Den* style presentation. Throughout the *Challenge* students discovered and developed key employability skills whilst competing against each other to develop the most successful small business. We are grateful to the support of local volunteers who worked with our students throughout the two days and to Stour Management who funded the programme; without their support we would not have been able to run the event.





THE ROYAL NAVY VISIT SCHOOL

We were very lucky to be joined by The Royal Navy who came into school and presented the children with team building activities and challenges.

One of the challenges involved a large spider's web of ropes that students had to navigate from one side to the other with the help of their team, making sure that they didn't touch the web. There were some students acting as casualties, showing great trust in their class mates, as they were passed from one side to the other.

Another challenge involved building wheelbarrows and racing them in teams along our track.

All the students involved thoroughly enjoyed this visit and really embraced the challenges set.

We would like to thank The Royal Navy team for their hard work throughout the day and for all the encouragement and insight they gave the students.





SPORTS DAY

SNHS's annual sports day took place on Wednesday 13th July and the event was blessed with beautiful weather. This year's set up had to be slightly different to normal to comply with COVID guidance. Despite this, all year groups thoroughly enjoyed their time to compete and there was a wonderful atmosphere out on the field.

The students competed in good spirits and plenty of encouragement and support was offered to all. It was brilliant to see three school records broken, Evie broke the Year 7 Girls 300m with a time of 53.97sec and Amelia broke the Year 7 Girls shot putt with a distance of 7.36m. Ethan in Year 8 broke the shot putt record which had stood since 1993. All three of his throws beat the previous record with his best being 10.91m.

The now traditional tug-of-war competition was enjoyed by all, mixed teams from each year group and house entered into the spirit of the day with a great show of strength and technique. The winners from each year group were 7 Barnes, 8 Hardy, 9 Hardy and 10 Thornhill.

The field events throughout the day continued with serious competition and everyone making a big effort to come out on top. Many of the track events were very close, with runners keen to secure points for their houses.

At the end of the day the whole school was able to watch the relay races and cheer on their teams; the houses' points were only separated by a few numbers!

Ultimately the overall winners were Boys: 7R, 8B, 9B, 10R Girls: 7R, 8H, 9T, 10H and the school house winner was Thornhill.





Sports Day Cont....





ACTIVITIES DAYS - ENRICHMENT TASTERS

As this particularly strange and disrupted year draws to a close we are looking forward to a fresh start in September and the chance to bring in new opportunities for students that many of us in education feel have been sadly side-lined over the years. Starting in September students will be able to choose from a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that will run at the end of the school day on Mondays and Wednesdays. In order to give students a taste of what will be on offer we used the last two full days of term to run short taster sessions for many of the activities. Every student was able to attend 14 different sessions over the two days, including pod casting, trampolining, Warhammer model painting, cookery, board games, live band, book club, pilates, chess club, pottery, songwriting, international cinema, rugby, netball and many more. Given the opportunity to share their personal passions with students, the enthusiasm of staff was palpable and with the additional good fortune of excellent weather there was a buzz of positive excitement throughout the school. Although students will only need to select a few of their favourite clubs to participate in in September, it was a testament to the staff and students that all engaged so readily with all of the sessions. For students and staff alike this has been a great insight into will be on offer next year – something to really look forward to, and a fantastic way to end a difficult year.

