



BOURNEMOUTH SCHOOL

Headteacher's Half-termly Newsletter

In this relatively short half term we have continued to prepare students in Years 11 and 13 for their public examinations. Year 11 students began their study leave last Wednesday, with Year 13 following on Friday. Over the next few weeks, students from both year groups will be coming into school not only to sit their examinations, but also to attend “master classes” and to receive small group or 1:1 support. Both year groups approached their last “official day” in school with maturity; there was lots of shirt-signing, sharing of memories, laughter, and (some) tears!. We wish all our students facing their examinations the very best of luck.

On Wednesday 22 April, we hosted a “Question Time” style event discussing the pros and cons of degree apprenticeships, comparing them with traditional degree courses. The panel consisted of Professor Stuart Cotterill (Director of Education and Student Experience, Health Sciences University, Bournemouth), Tom Hayes (Member of Parliament for Bournemouth East), Luke Dyson (Tech Centre Manager, JP Morgan) and myself. The event was presented by Chris Hall and filmed by his company, Hallmark Broadcast. You can watch the discussion through our website <https://www.bournemouth-school.org/2026/05/06/13290/> I am particularly grateful to Chris for not only suggesting the event, but also for taking a number of our Year 12 students under his wing and giving them the experience of being involved in a professional production.

Other notable events this half term:

- Year 12 work experience
- Year 10 Oceanarium trip
- PE and Art moderation days
- Geography Fieldwork trips
- Heath workers delivered a talk to geography students
- Merton College Oxford admissions workshop for Year 12
- House tennis competitions
- Junior maths challenge
- National scientific thinking challenge
- “*Engineering in the Future*” lecture for Year 7 students
- Aspiring medics event for Year 12 students
- CCF Tile Barn activity day
- Year 10 work experience
- Year 9 drama workshops

There have been so many recent sporting successes that it seems a little unfair to pick out the achievements of just one team, but in recent weeks the Year 8 footballers have won both the Town and County cups – a fantastic achievement! Well done!

Many of these events will no doubt feature in our more comprehensive end of term newsletter. Do keep an eye on our website for the latest news.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to share some important news regarding the future leadership of Bournemouth School and to outline the plans that are being put in place to ensure a smooth and orderly transition over the coming months.

It has been a real privilege to serve as Bournemouth School's eighth Headteacher and to play a small part in its continued success. Over the last sixteen years, the School has achieved a great deal, thanks to the dedication and commitment of staff, students, governors, parents and carers.

Throughout much of this journey, Mrs Katie Ateaque has worked closely alongside me and has played a significant role in many of the improvements and successes we have achieved together. I was therefore delighted that, at the end of last term, Mrs Ateaque was appointed as my successor. I have every confidence in her leadership, and with her deep understanding of the School community, I know she will continue to build on Bournemouth School's many strengths and achievements.

Over recent weeks, Mrs Ateaque and I have been carefully considering how best to manage the transition in leadership so that the School is in the strongest possible position for the future. In particular, we have focused on three key questions:

- How do we ensure the School is in the best possible position for a future Ofsted inspection, anticipated in January 2028?
- What should the Senior Leadership Team structure look like from January 2027 onwards?
- How can we ensure a smooth and orderly transition to that structure while continuing to accelerate school improvement?

In planning for the future, we have also taken into account several important factors, including recent changes within the Senior Leadership Team and the need to strengthen leadership capacity across the School. Following careful discussion with trustees, it has been agreed that we will move more quickly than originally planned to establish the new leadership structure. This plan included the appointment of two new Assistant Headteachers from September 2026. Interviews for these posts have taken place over the last week. I am delighted to announce that Mrs Willis (currently at QE School) and Dr Carter (currently our Year 8/9 Director of Learning) were appointed and Mrs Willis will be joining us in September.

In light of these appointments, Mrs Ateaque will take up the role of Headteacher from September 2026, earlier than originally anticipated. This will allow her to begin implementing her vision and improvement plans for the School at the earliest opportunity.

I continue to plan to leave the school at the end of December, and in the Autumn Term will work alongside Mrs Ateaque and the newly formed leadership team in a supportive capacity. This arrangement is intended purely to provide continuity, clarify leadership responsibilities, and ensure that the School remains strongly placed for continued improvement. We believe these arrangements provide the best possible foundation for Bournemouth School's next chapter.

As you will know from the letter sent out yesterday to parents of next year's Year 7-11, we are currently reviewing our approach to mobile phones and are considering whether students in the lower school should no longer be permitted to bring smartphones onto the school site. Please do ensure that you contribute to the consultation by completing the on-line form (further details and the link are in yesterday's letter).

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of Bournemouth School.

Have a lovely half-term!

Dr Dorian P Lewis
22/05/26