



BOURNEMOUTH SCHOOL

Headteacher's Half-termly Newsletter

Dear Parent/Carer

As I reach the end of my first term as Headteacher of Bournemouth School, I want to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a busy, positive and rewarding start to the academic year, and to share some of the many achievements and developments that have taken place across our school community.

When we came together for our staff INSET days in September, I shared my vision for Bournemouth School and the priorities that will guide my leadership. I reassured colleagues that I believe the School is on the right path and that my intention is to build on the many strengths that already exist. My central priority is to achieve **'outstanding outcomes for all through exemplary teaching and learning'**.

As a grammar school, we rightly place great importance on academic achievement and the qualifications our students gain. However, education at Bournemouth School is about much more than examination results. We want our young people to leave us as curious, resilient, respectful and confident individuals, equipped with the knowledge, skills and character to make a positive difference to society. I have already seen many examples of these qualities in our students, and I look forward to working with staff, parents and carers to nurture them further.

Celebrating outstanding academic success

It was a real pleasure to celebrate our GCSE and A level results in August, which were a testament to the hard work, commitment and talent of our students, alongside the dedication of our staff.

At A level, 19 students achieved at least three or four A* grades, while 57 students achieved at least three A or A* grades. Overall, 71% of grades were awarded at A*–B. These excellent results have contributed to our Sixth Form growing to more than 400 students.

At GCSE, 40% of all grades were awarded at grades 8 or 9, and 32% of the cohort achieved ten or more GCSEs at grades 7–9. Four students achieved grade 9 in all eleven of their GCSE subjects — an exceptional accomplishment.

I would like to congratulate all our students on their achievements and thank the staff who supported them throughout their studies. We are immensely proud of what they have accomplished.

Improving our school environment

A great deal of work took place over the summer to improve our facilities and enhance the learning environment for students. This included the refurbishment of two laboratories, a new science preparation room, new doors and carpets, the creation of a new Food Preparation and Nutrition demonstration room, and improvements to our IT facilities, including those used by the Music Department.

We have also installed a new canopy in the junior playground, providing our Year 7 students with a sheltered space to enjoy during break and lunchtime.

These improvements reflect our commitment to ensuring that students have access to facilities that support high-quality teaching, learning and wider school life. I am grateful to everyone who worked so hard over the summer to make these developments possible.

A positive start for our students

The beginning of the academic year is always a particularly busy time as we welcome new students, support transitions and help everyone settle into the routines and expectations of a new school year.

For our Year 7 students, this means adjusting to life at Bournemouth School, building friendships and developing independence. For our Year 12 students, it means adapting to the expectations of Sixth Form study and taking on greater responsibility for their learning. Meanwhile, our Year 11 and Year 13 students have begun the important work of preparing for their examinations and planning their next steps.

We have also held information evenings for parents and carers across all year groups, with the Year 8 event scheduled for 17 November. These evenings have provided valuable opportunities to share information, explain expectations and help families understand how best to support their children. Our Year 10 evening focused on work experience, while parents and carers of Year 11 and Year 13 students had the opportunity to meet subject leaders and discuss how to support their children during these important examination years.

One particularly welcome development has been the involvement of older students, who have shared their experiences and advice with younger students and their families. Their contributions have been excellent, and it is a pleasure to see the confidence with which our students speak about their experiences of school.

I was also delighted to welcome parents and carers of year 13 students yesterday to our first in-person Parents' Evening since the pandemic. Meeting face to face provides a valuable opportunity to strengthen the partnership between home and school, and I intend to create more opportunities for parents and carers to attend events in person.

Thank you to everyone who has attended events so far this term and engaged so positively with the School. A strong partnership between families and staff is essential to ensuring that every student can thrive.

Sport: enthusiasm, teamwork and success

Our extra-curricular PE programme has got off to a fantastic start, with impressive numbers attending clubs and training sessions. More than 60 Year 7 students have taken part in football, over 100 students in Years 7–11 have attended rugby, and more than 40 students have joined cross-country club.

It is particularly encouraging to see so many students getting involved, developing their skills and enjoying the benefits of teamwork, commitment and physical activity.

Our teams have already enjoyed considerable success this term:

Cross-country

- The Junior Boys team finished second in the first round of the English Schools' Cross-Country Competition at Bryanston, qualifying for the Regional Final.
- The Senior Boys team finished first, with Bournemouth School students taking the first four individual places. This is an outstanding achievement, and four students have qualified for the Regional Final.

Rugby

- Our 1st XV began their National Cup campaign with an impressive victory over St Bartholomew's School, Newbury.

Golf

- We celebrated our first-ever golf tournament victory at Canford School.

Congratulations to all our students and the staff who coach, organise and support them. These achievements reflect not only sporting ability, but also the dedication and teamwork that we seek to encourage throughout school life.

Music

Our Music Department has also made an excellent start to the year, with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities already underway.

On 4 October, approximately 120 musicians from Bournemouth School and Bournemouth School for Girls came together for an orchestral training day led by conductor Enyi Okpara. Students of all instrumental abilities worked together on a variety of pieces, performing two of them to our Year 7 students in the afternoon.



It was wonderful to see so many young musicians learning from one another and sharing their enthusiasm for music. We are grateful to SoundStorm for funding this valuable opportunity.

Events such as this demonstrate the importance of providing opportunities beyond the classroom, allowing students to discover new interests, develop their talents and build confidence through shared experiences.

Sixth Form students achieve national recognition

One of the highlights of the term has been the outstanding success of our Sixth Form students Alex, Sophie, Parry, Hector, Alex and Sam, who achieved first place in the national Cancer Research Prize competition organised by Imperial College London.

The team impressed the judges with their presentation of *SpotWatch: A Solution to Standardised Melanoma Detection*, demonstrating creativity, scientific understanding and the ability to apply their knowledge to a real-world challenge.

Their proposed solution is a transparent adhesive patch designed to support standardised monitoring of moles using smartphone photography. The project impressed the judges sufficiently to secure first place nationally.

As a result, Bournemouth School will receive £2,500 to support science-related activities. The team has also been offered an online mentoring meeting with an academic from Imperial College London.



This is a fantastic achievement and a wonderful example of what can happen when students are encouraged to think creatively, pursue their interests and apply their learning to challenges beyond the classroom. Congratulations to the team and the staff who supported them.

If you would like and are able to support opportunities that would otherwise be difficult to finance, donations to the School Fund are always greatly appreciated. The School Fund helps us provide resources and experiences that would otherwise be difficult to finance, including library books, PE equipment and our minibus.

Further information, including how to make a one-off or regular donation, is available here:

[The School Fund – Bournemouth School](#)

Thank you to all the families who already support the School in this way.

Learning beyond the classroom

Our students have also begun to enjoy a range of educational visits and enrichment opportunities this term. Year 8 students took part in a Battlelab trip organised by the Ministry of Defence, while members of our Combined Cadet Force visited The Tank Museum.

These experiences bring learning to life, broaden students' horizons and help them develop interests and skills that complement their classroom education. They are an important part of the wider educational experience we want Bournemouth School to offer.

Safeguarding update

Earlier this month we were contacted by Dorset Police regarding a growing concern about a trend known as "Urbexing". This involves young people entering abandoned or derelict buildings without permission as part of urban exploration.

Urbexing is illegal and can place those involved in extremely dangerous situations, including exposure to unsafe structures, hazardous materials, and other significant risks. It is therefore important that this activity is actively discouraged.

In response, we delivered a Personal Development session during tutor time, supported by a short educational video and resources provided by the police. Educating young people about the risks and consequences of Urbexing is an important part of keeping them safe.

We would also encourage parents and carers to discuss this issue at home, helping to reinforce the dangers and support young people in making safe and responsible choices.

If you would like any additional information, please contact dsl@bournemouth-school.org

Looking ahead

As I reflect on my first term, I am struck by the energy, talent and commitment that exist across Bournemouth School. From academic achievement and sporting success to music, scientific innovation and enrichment beyond the classroom, there is much to celebrate.

I have also greatly appreciated the support I have received from students, staff, parents and carers. I am keen to continue building strong relationships with families and to ensure that parents and carers feel informed, involved and confident in the direction of the School.

My focus remains on building upon the School's existing strengths, supporting excellent teaching and learning, and ensuring that every student is encouraged to achieve their potential and develop the character and confidence to succeed in the wider world.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. I wish all our students, staff, parents and carers a restful and enjoyable half-term break, and I look forward to the opportunities and achievements that the remainder of the autumn term will bring.

Have a lovely half term.

Mrs K Ateaque

23/10/26