



The Gryphon School

Newsletter September 2016 – A very warm welcome

I trust you all enjoyed the sunshine and warmer temperatures that returned to our shores over the summer holidays, having seemed to miss us over the last few years. We are delighted to welcome all our students and parents to the new academic year and include a special welcome to the new Year 7 and Sixth Form students, and all new students to the School.

New Staff

We also warmly welcome our new members of staff who are joining us from schools around this country and abroad, and also those starting their careers, following teacher training at universities. There are 20 new teachers joining the 108 teacher team. Mr Strowger is a new Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form. Other new Heads of Department are Miss Rann as Head of RE, Mrs Dutton, as Head of Geography and Mr Miles as Head of Year 7. In 2016-17 Mr Cummings will lead PE and Sport following Mr South's return to Scotland. There are also new appointments to the support staff team including in PR and Marketing, SEND support, administration and subject technicians.

School Development

The School was successful in its grant application bid to the Education Funding Agency who fund academy schools, to upgrade the lighting across the school. This work has commenced and will continue largely when the students are not here. We have been given full planning permission to build a new teaching block to replace temporary classrooms and will apply, once again, to the EFA Condition Improvement Fund to secure funding for this project.

Five Star School

This year we will be producing a detailed Annual Report which captures all the achievements, events and opportunities at the School. In August The Real Schools Guide 2016, rated all state-funded secondary schools across the country. Schools were evaluated by using 25 different measures, put together from the latest publicly-available data and broken into four categories – attainment, teaching, attendance, and outcomes. There were only two schools with a 5 star rating in Dorset including The Gryphon and only 4 in Somerset overall.

Prize giving – Saturday 17 September 2016

There were excellent examination results this summer and they are summarised below. These will be celebrated in the 2016 Prize Giving ceremony in Sherborne Abbey that will be held on Saturday 17 September at 11.00am. All Year 11 and Year 13 students from last year, and their parents, are welcome to attend. The guest speaker, who will award the prizes, is Christian Guy, the Director of the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and former Gryphon student.

2016 Achievements – The Sixth Form

The A Level results are excellent and the pass rates are well above national averages. The progress students made from KS4 is very good. The most important part of A level results is ensuring each individual student achieves what they require for the next stage in their lives. This includes starting university courses across the country (including large numbers at Russell Group universities), taking up apprenticeships, starting careers or joining training courses.

Our Sixth Form is one of the largest and most successful in the country because of our high expectations, facilities and the quality of our specialist A Level teaching. The range of opportunities, ventures, activities and events, together with considerable pastoral support all contribute to the great successes academically.

This year there were 189 students sitting A2 examinations – the highest ever number. Most of our students take the “traditional” academic A levels. These results show:

- 8.2% of exams taken achieved the A* grade
- 27% of exams taken were awarded an A or A* grade. In 2015 the national figure fell slightly to 25.9%.
- 54% of exams taken were awarded an A*-B grades
- 79% of exams taken were awarded an A*-C grade
- Over 99% of exams taken were awarded at least a pass grade
- Three students gained places at the University of Cambridge or Oxford
- 40% of the university places are at highly prized Russell Group Universities including in University Schools of Medicine

145 students applied through UCAS for a university place with 95% gaining their choice place – the vast majority getting into their first choice. Others are moving to Foundation degrees / HNDs, to Further Education colleges and to Apprenticeships.

Each individual student should be congratulated on their personal achievements. We wish them all every success and look forward to them returning to inspire future generations of Gryphon Sixth Formers. Exceptional outcomes for the following should be particularly noted:

Samuel Lovatt, from Milborne Port	A* A* A*	Chemical Engineering, Imperial College
Emma Morgan, from Templecombe,	A* A* A*D	Game Arts, Plymouth College of Art
Jack Pitts, from East Coker	A*A*A A	Chemical Engineering, University of Bath
Katie Charlton, from Yeovil	A*A*A	Law, University of York
Will Clarke, from Sherborne	A*A*A	Physics with Maths, University of Southampton
Alice Lester, from Yeovil	A*A*A	Sport & Exercise Science, University of Bath
Charlie McCosker, from Yetminster	A*A*A	Art Foundation, Central St Martins

Tamina Pain, from Yeovil	A*A*A	French & Spanish, King's College London
Henry Straughan, from Melbury Bubb	A*A*A	PPE, University of Oxford
Martha Solloway, from Thornford	A*A*B	Art Foundation, Kingston University
Louisa Cary, from Yeovil	A*A A A	Medicine, University of Edinburgh
Kat McManus, from Milborne Port	A*A A	Geography, London School of Economics
Rachel Anderson-Deas, from Sherborne	A*A A	History, University of Oxford
Daisy Harris, from Stourton Caundle	A*A A	Psychology, University of Exeter
Liam Penlington, from Bradford Abbas	A*A A	Biological Sciences, Imperial College
Sophia Rogerson, from Ryme Intrinseca	A*A A	Psychology & Behavioural Sciences, Univ. of Cambridge
Hannah Wheeler, from Yeovil	A*A A	Biochemistry, University of Bath
Jack Woodward, from Queen Camel	A*A A	International Management, University of Bath
April Yeatman, from Knighton	A*A A	Gap Year, applying for 2017
Chloe Gauvin, from Yeovil	A*A B	History & Economics, University of Reading
Arabella Hodgson, from Osborne	A*A B	Law, University to be confirmed
William Reid, from Sparkford	A*A B	Politics & Sociology, Newcastle University
Chloe Symms, from Adber	A*A B	Geography, University of Exeter
Sebastian Thrower, from Yetminster	A*A B	Film, Falmouth University (deferred to 2017)
George Abbott, from Yeovil	A A A	Chemical Engineering, Loughborough University
Callum Boa, from Yetminster	A A A	Geography, University College London (UCL)
Ella Foster, from Yetminster	A A A	Gap year, applying for 2017
Jack Martin, from Yeovil	A A A	Mechanical Engineering, University of Bath

Achievements – Year 11

The 2016 GCSE and BTEC results are very high (and only slightly lower than last year's exceptional results). This is against a backdrop of significantly lower pass rates nationally – the national A*-C pass rate fell by 2.9%. There are some spectacular individual results from students of all abilities with standards significantly above national levels particularly as The Gryphon is a community school serving the full ability range.

- The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades including English and Maths was 70%
- Almost a quarter of grades were A* or an A
- The A*-C pass rate in Mathematics has been the highest in Dorset for the last 2 years at 82% and this was achieved for the third consecutive year – it compares to 61% nationally. The A*-C pass rate in English increased to 78% compared to 60% nationally.
- The results in the traditional subjects of the Sciences - Biology, Chemistry and Physics - English, Art, Drama, Music, Geography, Sport, Business Economics and Mathematics are very strong.
- 32 students achieved 8 or more A* or A grades. Two students gained 13 A* grades and four other students each achieved 10 A* grades.

There were 246 students sitting examinations in Year 11. There were some tremendous individual achievements in individual subjects including Maths and English. Some students exceeded personal targets with E, F and G grades of which we are very proud. It is impossible to list every individual but there are some exceptional outcomes for the following students, all of whom gained at least 9 A* and A grades:

Elmo Barratt, from Alweston 13 A* grades	Elizabeth Lovatt, from Milborne Port 1 A*, 9 A, 2 B, 1 C grade
Emma Dawson, from Sherborne 13 A* grades	Emily Hayward, from Yeovil 4 A*, 5 A, 3 B grades
Callum Henry, from Marston Magna 10 A*, 4 A grades	Maisie Bakewell, from Weymouth 3 A*, 6 A, 2 B, 1 C grade
Antonia Stone, from Buckland Newton 9 A*, 4 A and 1 B grade	Jonathan Dey, from Sherborne 3 A*, 6 A, 4 B, 1 D grade
Callum Morley, from Milborne Port 8 A*, 5 A, 1 B grade	Emily Lewin, from Sherborne 3 A*, 6 A, 1 B, 1 C grade
Leoni Fretwell, from Sherborne 10 A*, 2 A grades	Matthew Harris, from Pulham 2 A*, 7 A, 2 B grades
George Goodfellow, from Sherborne 10 A*, 2 A, 1 B grade	James Anderson-Deas, from Sherborne 2 A*, 7 A, 2 B, 1 C grade
William Blake, from Milborne Port 2 A*, 10 A, 1 B grade	Rebecca Lilley, from Stourton Caundle 2 A*, 7 A, 2 B grades
Madeleine Webster-Harris, from Sherborne 7 A*, 4 A, 1 C grade	Ben Stevens, from Buckland Newton 2 A* 7 A, 4 B grades
Anthony Lyons, from Thornford 5 A*, 6 A, 2 B, 1 C grade	Luke Furniss, from Yeovil 1 A*, 8 A, 2 B, 1 C grade
Amelia Monaghan, from Sherborne 5 A*, 6 A, 1 B grade	Rory Baird, from Sherborne 3 A*, 5 A, 5 B grades
Tegan Evans, from Yeovil 4 A*, 7 A, 1 B, 1 C grade	Isabelle Johnson, from Sherborne 3 A*, 5 A, 3 B, 1 C grade
Noah Peet, from Sherborne 4 A*, 7 A, 2 B, 1 D grade	Scout MacPherson, from Halstock 3 A* 5 A, 2 B, 2 C grades
Caroline Hawkins, from Yeovil 2 A*, 9 A, 1 B grade	Chloe Roberts, from Sherborne 1 A*, 7 A, 2 B, 1 C grade
Juliette Barlow, from Sherborne 10 A* grades	Thomas Walker-Arnott, from Sherborne 1 A*, 7 A, 5 B grades
Oliver Tam, from Leigh 4 A*, 6 A, 2 B, 1 C grade	Bartek Trojanowski, from Yeovil 8 A, 3 B, 3 C grades

Developing The Gryphon – a Multi-Academy Trust

In June we wrote to all parents to inform you that the members and governors are reviewing the best strategy for the future of our School along with its close partners. Our priority is to enable our School to continue to provide an excellent education for all our students while protecting the School's role at the heart of our community, along with our unique qualities and strengths.

Following careful consideration, the Governing Body believes that there are a number of key benefits for our school to become part of a new local primary/secondary multi academy trust. The schools that have chosen to be involved are Buckland Newton CEVC Primary, St Andrews CEVC Primary (Yetminster), Sherborne Primary, Sherborne Abbey CEVC Primary, Sherborne Learning Centre (Pupil Referral Unit), St Mary's CEVC Primary (Bradford Abbas) and The Gryphon School.

Being part of a new multi academy trust will allow us to strengthen the links further between our schools in order to support continuity of education from 0-19 within our community. The Sherborne Schools' Partnership has worked closely together for many years to provide an excellent education for our young people, and so to collaborate more closely is an exciting prospect, particularly as academies also have greater flexibility in delivering the curriculum. The opportunities include developing our provision, sharing best practice, being more creative in our curriculum, enabling further development of our teachers/staff and taking collective responsibility for all of the children's development and progress. There is also more freedom on how we spend our funding and we would be able to explore opportunities for financial efficiency, determining for ourselves which services and providers we will buy into to provide outstanding provision for our children.

There is of course much more to do in developing our ideas for the new partnership and the schools have formed a Joint Steering Board to undertake the necessary and important due diligence and planning. If successful in our plans, we would aim to establish the SAST by Spring 2017. We will be sharing more information about this during this term.

Café and Library use of biometric fingerprints

We use biometric fingerprint technology in both the Library Resource Centre and the Café. During the summer the software and hardware used have been upgraded which means students, with parents' permission, need to re-register. A letter explaining this has been sent out and most students have re-registered. Thank you for your co-operation with this – it is important to speed up access to the Café at lunch and break which are very busy periods. We do apologise for some delays we have had in the first few days as students become registered.

Expectations regarding phones and BYOD

As you know we are keen supporters of using modern technology including smart phones and other mobile devices. It should be seen as a privilege to use these devices and there are strict guidelines to be followed. The key is that they are used for educational purposes. Please do not expect a student to respond to a text or phone message during lesson time. If there is an emergency that requires you to contact your child during the day please contact the school.

Help for families - Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility

A reminder that it is important that any parent(s) who qualify for Free School Meal eligibility, including those in the Sixth Form, claim their entitlement. The 16-19 Bursary Scheme is also determined on the same criteria. The School does receive additional pupil premium funding in its budget for every student eligible and claiming Free School Meals.

The School cannot apply for Free School Meals on your behalf. You should apply to Dorset Direct on 01305 221000. Alternatively, you can apply using a paper application form which can be downloaded from the Dorset County Council Website (www.dorsetforyou.com). The information is treated as confidential.

Parking and Traffic on Site – Red zones

There is very little space for parents to park on site. We do ask that you do not come onto the school site to pick up your child before 3.45 pm to avoid the main buses leaving. If you do come before then you should expect delays and will need to be patient.

There are new Red Route areas around the roundabout and zebra crossing where we ask you not to park or wait at any time. This is to support student safety as students enter and leave the site.

Thanks - High Expectations and Uniform

Thank you for supporting the School in promoting high standards of uniform. The School has an affordable and practical uniform which remains popular. Students should wear black shoes. There should be no other colours. There are some shoe designs which are like training shoes – as long as they are completely black that is acceptable. Trousers or skirts should be black. Black jeans, leggings or jeggings are not acceptable and skirts should not be short. Of course if there are particular circumstances that make it difficult for your child or family to obtain the correct uniform please contact the School and we may be able to help and support you.

There is also an expectation that students come prepared to learn with the right equipment every day. Every student is expected to have the basics in every lesson ie a pen, pencil, ruler, calculator and the Student Diary. This is the bare minimum and most of our students always have this and more.

Some dates for the rest of 2016

Some of the key events this term are shown below:

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| ▶ Prize Giving – Saturday 17 September | ▶ Sixth Form Open Evening – Wednesday 9 November |
| ▶ Y13 Parents' Evening – 19 September | ▶ Y7 Parents' Evening – 21 November |
| ▶ Y13 Celebration of Achievement – 6 October | ▶ INSET Day – Friday 25 November |
| ▶ New Y6 Open Evening – 4 October | ▶ Y10 Parents' Evening – 28 November |
| ▶ Y7 Carey Camp – 26-30 September | ▶ School Concert – 3 November |
| ▶ Y7 and Y12 Tutor Evening – Monday 10 October | ▶ School Production – Footloose – 7 & 9 December |
| ▶ Y11 Parent Forum – 2 November | ▶ Carol Service in Sherborne Abbey – Tuesday 13 December |

On behalf of the Governors and Staff at The Gryphon, I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable and another outstanding year.
S M Hillier Headteacher

Headteacher Mr S M Hillier MA (Cantab) • A Church of England Secondary School
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