

SUMMER 2024

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Ten Tors

Mock Election

Sporting Success

SAST
SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER



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WELCOME

As we look forward to the summer break this newsletter is an excellent reminder of all that has been achieved during this busy term. Our Y13 students were entered for over 600 A level exams, our Y11 students for over 2,300 GCSE exams; in total, nearly 6,500 public exam papers have been sat by our students. Our foreign trips to Berlin and the Normandy Battlefields, alongside more local visits to the Jurassic coast, Longleat, the Big Pit National Coal Museum, Oxbridge universities, Bournemouth University and the Dorset Careers Festival have provided an opportunity for our students to learn outside the classroom, develop their social skills, increase confidence, and encourage personal development. The value and importance of these experiences is perhaps best represented by our Adventurous Training Department, which this term entered five Gryphon teams into the prestigious Ten Tors Event, the most teams of any comprehensive school in the country; and, provided over 20 Gryphon students with the chance to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace to receive their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. Our U15 Girls' football team reached the semi-finals of the FA National Schools' Cup Competition, meaning our girls are one of the top four teams in the country, which was a magnificent achievement. A musical soiree, a music tour of our local primary schools, and the Dance Project have allowed our performing arts students to showcase their talents, whilst our Art & Design exhibition has demonstrated the exceptional creative talent in our school. Our Y11 and Y13 Proms, the Sports Awards Evening and our end of year Celebration of Achievements events will be a chance to celebrate life in all its fullness at The Gryphon School.



As we look ahead to the next academic year, we do so with real confidence that our determination to be a school where students and staff thrive is built on strong foundations. Please read our articles on the updated uniform policy, and on mobile phones, on this page of our newsletter. We would welcome the support of all parents and carers in implementing our uniform and mobile phone policies for the best interests of our students and our wider school community.

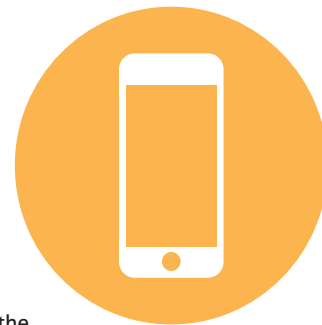
We wish those students who are moving on to new ventures at university, college, apprenticeships and the world of work all the very best. Several staff are also leaving for promotion, retirement or other opportunities; we are very grateful to them for all that they have given to the school and wish them well. Special mention must go to Mrs Cavallaro, an exceptional Geography teacher and environmental champion, who has been at The Gryphon for 12 years; Mrs Gritt, an outstanding PE teacher, leader and tutor, who has given 18 years' devoted service to our school; and Mrs Peacocke, an excellent maths teacher and inspirational Head of Year, who for over 20 years has enabled so many Gryphon students to flourish under her extraordinarily committed and dedicated pastoral care. They will be sorely missed.

Jim Gower
Headteacher

MOBILE PHONES SEPTEMBER 2024

As you will already know, in line with Government guidance, we will be amending our mobile phone policy for September 2024. After consultation with parents, staff and students it is clear that the best way forward is to adopt a '**Never used, seen or heard**' policy across our school site. This means that from September, students will not be allowed to have their phones visible during the school day unless explicitly authorised by staff members. Student's phones will be 'off and away' for the duration of the school day. We are aware that parents feel safe knowing their child has access to a mobile phone before and after school, therefore students will be allowed their phone in their possession, held in their school bag until 3.10pm. If a student is found using their mobile phone, our new - more stringent - policy

will be followed and the student's mobile phone will be confiscated until the end of the school day. A full copy of the new, updated Behaviour Policy (which includes mobile phones) will be on our website very soon. We are really looking forward to our new 'off and away' policy, as we feel strongly that the students will benefit from having time away from devices for the duration of their school day. There are many studies that prove that students' mental wellbeing is improved from time away from devices and screens. If you have any questions about the new policy, please do not hesitate to contact us, via the school office.



UNIFORM CHANGES FROM SEPTEMBER 2024

We are having just one choice of skirt from September, a black box pleated style. You may find it called a Charleston Style skirt in some of the outlets it can be purchased from.

The skirt is available from the following uniform outlets:

KITZ UK

South Western Business Park Sherborne –
from the shop or online

South West Schoolwear

10 Wine Street Yeovil – from shop or online

The skirt is also available in the following local stores and at a competitive price

Tesco's F&F range

£11:00 for a pack of two (adjustable waists)

Marks & Spencer's

£14:00 for a pack of two (adjustable waists)

Asda George range

£8:00 single skirt (adjustable waist and pockets)

Asda George range

£12:00 for a pack of two (adjustable waist and full pleats)

Asda George range



OUR GRYPHON VALUES

To reach the aspiration of all members of our community flourishing, we have identified four core Christian values that we aim to achieve to enable us to be a '10:10' school, where all our school community can live life in all its fullness. These four values are **Leadership, Integrity, Fellowship and Exploration (LIFE)**. In the table below we have identified what these four core values might look like in the life of the school. Every decision made within school is made with reference to our vision of being a school where all students experience **LIFE** in its fullness.

Leadership	Integrity	Fellowship	Exploration
The action of leading a group of people or an organisation.	The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.	Friendly association, especially with people who share one's interests.	The action of exploring an unfamiliar area.
"Art justly, love mercy and walk humbly" (Micah 6: 8)	"Make yourself an example of good works with integrity and dignity" (Titus 2: 7)	"Do to others what you want them to do to you" (Luke 6: 31)	"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7: 7)
Team Captains	Attendance	School community (kindness, forgiveness & understanding others)	Academic aspiration
Year & School council	Uniform	Being part of a team	PSHRE & Careers programme
Equality & Diversity Council	Equipment	Assembly & Collective Worship	Trips & visits
Peer Mentors	Homework	Volunteering	Extra-curricular programme
Sports Leaders	Rewards	Fundraising & charitable support	Adventurous Training
Prefects	Outcomes	Helping at school events	Y6 Transition & Y9 Options



Toilets are something we all take for granted, but toilets, sanitation and clean water are a huge problem for billions across our world.

Therefore, this year during Lent, pupils at The Gryphon School took on a challenge to 'twin' the school toilets and make a lasting difference by supporting the project Toilet Twinning (<https://toilettwinning.org/>), which is a programme within the international development charity Tearfund. Toilet Twinning works across parts of Africa and Asia providing clean water and training in sanitation, along with installing clean and safe toilets in communities that don't have them. It costs £60 to twin a toilet and through fundraising both in and outside of school, the Gryphon community raised a whopping £900 and therefore enough money to twin 15 toilets. For each toilet twinned the school has received a certificate to be displayed in school. These were presented on Wednesday 3rd July by Hannah Holloway, Tearfund Partnerships Executive, who also took the opportunity to thank pupils and speak to Year 7 and 8 about the work of Toilet Twinning in their Act of Worship.

I would like to add my thanks to all who participated. Well done!

Reverend Jim Edie



THE GRYPHON SCHOOL GOES TO THE POLLS!

On Monday 1st July, over 1,000 Gryphon School students cast their votes in a mock general election.

Over recent weeks students have had assemblies on how the British voting system works and were shown manifestos for the five main parties standing in England.

On polling day, Year 12 polling clerks registered the students and handed them their ballots, and voters then went to the booths to vote for their chosen party (or to spoil their ballot!). It was fantastic to see all our students so politically engaged, and we hope this helps them to feel confident voting in real elections in the future.



DORSET CAREERS FAIR

57 Year 10 students went to the Dorset Careers fair at Kingston Maurward College this term.

Students were able to explore career options and enjoyed asking lots of questions to professionals. Students immersed themselves in all sorts of fun activities such as trying on police outfits, grip tests and language assessments.



CADBURY CASTLE

This is Year 7 at Cadbury Castle – one of six day walks to the site by Mr Cooke, ably supported by Miss Reeves. Whilst walking round the Castle students were taken through ten thousand years of history based on extensive reading by the leaders.



YEAR 7 CHALLENGE DAY

On Tuesday 2nd July, Year 7 Students took part in a year-wide 'Challenge Day' where, separated into teams within their tutor groups, they undertook tasks to test their Physical, Mental and Skill abilities. Across more than 20 stations, they worked in teams to score as many points as possible on each challenge.

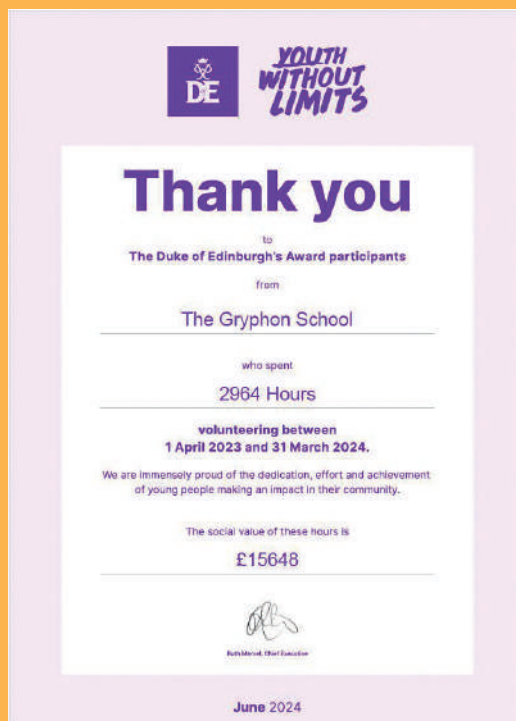
The idea was to provide students with the opportunity to work with other students in their tutor group that they wouldn't ordinarily mix with, and to encourage them to gain more confidence in their abilities to overcome difficult situations with the help of those around them.

Organised by Mr. Cooke, and supported by a collection of Year 12 students, Year 9 Peer Mentors and numerous staff including Year 7 tutors, the event was a great success with much positive feedback, even if some students failed to avoid a soaking in certain challenges!



LEADER TRAINING

This term the Gryphon team have been out training to become qualified leaders. Two volunteers completed Moorland Leaders assessments, and Mrs Cossins completed her Countryside Leaders Award. The trainee Mountain Leaders have been out and about, putting in the Quality Mountain Days needed for the assessment. This is Mr Fielding, Will, an ex-student and already qualified Mountain Leader, and Miss Reeve training in Snowdonia at half-term.



VOLUNTEERING

For the last ten years, an increasing number of Gryphon Students have been volunteering in the local community as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Activities have included helping with school clubs, working in charity and community shops and foodbanks, fundraising for charity, helping at youth groups, cadets, scouts and guides. The list is endless. This year DofE has started to quantify what students have achieved – with Gryphon students giving nearly 3,000 hours worth almost £16,000!



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Years 7, 8 & 9 have been out mountain biking around the woods near Shearwater, Longleat. The bikes, bought a few years back, were dusted off, and serviced by a volunteer so we could take students out cycling. All levels of ability are catered for on the 2-day experiences with Mr Cooke, our newly qualified MTB leader. The Longleat estate contains miles of track, keeping the students and public safe.



LEGO CLUB

The Gryphon School took their three projects- Lego Gryphon, Lego Sherborne Abbey and their latest project – Lego Sherborne Old Castle, to Sherborne Castle Country Fair to promote the school, and the public were very impressed!



STONEHENGE

The Gryphon School AT department took Years 7, 8 & 9 to Stonehenge World Heritage Site. Over three days each year group walked from Durrington Wall and Woodhenge along the Avenue to Stonehenge learning about the wide site along the way, thanks to Mr Cooke's vast knowledge of the area.

TEN TORS

In May, teams from all over the country took part in the Ten Tors Challenge on Dartmoor organised by the British Army. Once again, The Gryphon had the highest number of teams entered for any state school in the southwest, with five groups taking part, and more students entering with cadets and scouts.

The Ten Tors Challenge sees teams take on either 35, 45 or 55 mile distances, visiting ten checkpoints (Tors) across their routes, and carrying with them everything they need



to camp overnight on Dartmoor. This year The Gryphon School entered three teams for the 35-mile distance, one for 45 miles, and one for 55 miles.

This year's gruelling challenge fell on the hottest weekend of the year so far, in sharp contrast to the months of training by the students in hail, rain and snow. Last year we entered our youngest ever team, made up of Year 9 students, who unfortunately failed to complete the challenge, but this year they came back as Year 10's and completed the Ten Tors, showing grit and determination. Of the five Gryphon teams, four completed the challenge, but unfortunately due to the heat the 45-mile team did not finish.

Challenge Leader Geoff Cooke said "This is a huge achievement for all of these students; we are so proud of them all, for putting themselves forward, training through the winter months in all weather and then taking on arguably one of the hardest youth challenges in the world, in the hottest Ten Tors Challenge in our ten years of entering teams".

Headteacher Jim Gower said "The Gryphon School community is enormously proud of all our students,

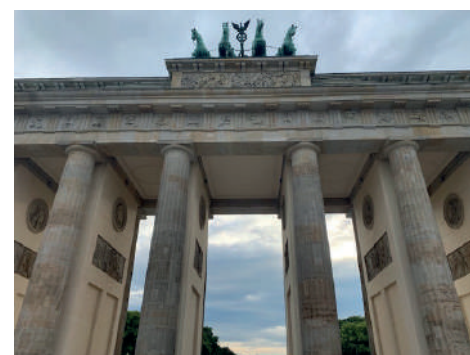


who participated in the Ten Tors challenge.. The Ten Tors challenge is a key component of our Adventurous Training programme, which aims to develop students' leadership, integrity, fellowship, and exploration; all key characteristics and values that allow our students to flourish and fulfil their potential both now and in the future. My thanks go to Geoff Cooke, our AT Manager, and his team of wonderfully committed volunteers, who provide our students with such a range of transformational opportunities through our AT programme".



GEOGRAPHY TRIP

Year 8 enjoyed a Geography trip to Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door this term. We had beautiful sunshine whilst carrying out fieldwork including measuring beach profiles at Durdle Door and learning about geology and the formation of Lulworth Cove. We also studied the land use at Lulworth Cove completing a land use survey. It was a great day seeing and learning about the amazing landforms and enjoying an ice cream in the sun.



BERLIN TRIP

In May half term we took 44 Year 10 History students to Berlin.

It was a very packed trip, including visits to the Reichstag, Brandenburg Gate, Olympic Stadium, Berlin TV Tower, Hohenschonhausen Prison/Museum (which we study at GCSE), Sachsenhausen Concentration camp, the Jewish Museum and Holocaust Memorial.

Pride and Schools Diversity Week

Over the last few weeks, we have been supporting and celebrating Pride and Schools Diversity Week (SDW).

We have created a range of artworks, run quizzes, held a bake sale, and most importantly, been ourselves! We raised £64 to support our Equality and Diversity work. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

The Gryphon School also supported Pride on Sunday 7th July. There was a fantastic atmosphere, and we had a fabulous group of students join in with the parade! It



was wonderful to see so much support for the LGBTQIA+ community in our small town! A huge thank you goes to our amazing Creative Design team for creating the heart we carried along the parade, our staff for marching with our students, and the students themselves for participating.



Diversity Art Project

Our brilliant students volunteered to get involved in the Diversity Art Project. They learnt the alphabet in British sign language and used this to spell out the word they chose to represent diversity – UNIQUE! The project was made so successful by their wonderful teamwork and creativity!



FINE ART - STILL LIFE

Year 7 students have been creating beautiful observations of still life fruit during their art lessons. Students have been drawing and painting the fruit directly from life, which is challenging, but produces greater realism and control of materials. The students painted these objects in acrylic and pencil. Well done Year 7 Fine Art.

Mr Malone

Sculpture Trail Trip

On a brisk Tuesday morning, 47 art students travelled to Street to visit the sculpture trail weaving and winding through the pristine grounds of the private school, Millfield. Students came prepared with cameras and sketchbooks to record their findings. The trip was scheduled to coincide with the launch of the new project where students have a choice of theme to pursue: Organic Forms, Landscape, Aged, Objects, Fluid Form and Helmets and Armour.

The sculpture trail boasted 28 pieces with an assortment of subjects, offering our students bountiful directions of inspiration and interpretation. The scope of the sculptures' make up was as varied with materials including stone, steel, cast iron, moving water, wood, Spanish white marble, granite and fiberglass. Artists included in the collection were Peter Randall-Page, Simon Hitchens and Jane Gledhill to mention a few. The students were impressed with the scale and setting of the art works. One group had the pleasure of walking through the stables and entering the new state of the art indoor riding arena.



Four friendly and knowledgeable members of the Millfield Art and Design department were on hand to lead the tour and offer information and insights about the artworks. Whilst viewing sculptures, students were encouraged to assign one or more of the project's theme choices and discuss the title and artist's potential message behind the work. Interpretive dialogues and note-taking was followed by sketching in field diaries.

These photographs, drawings and interpretations will be presented in their books as marks for the first assessment objective. The sculpture trail is open to the public on Saturdays and a great asset in our own neighbourhood. We look forward to further collaborations with Millfield in the future.

GBBO'S CAROLE VISITS STUDENTS



We had the pleasure of welcoming Great British Bake Off baker, Carole Edwards, to The Gryphon School. Carole took part in the Great British Bake Off in 2022 and the Christmas special last year. This gave our Year 10 Hospitality and Catering students a chance to bake alongside her, whilst making apple & cinnamon swirls. The students put into practice making a finished product from flaky pastry after learning to make the pastry from scratch earlier in the year. Carole finished her visit with a Q&A with our students. The Gryphon School very much looks forward to inviting Carole back in for another visit after such a lovely and inspiring time.

Challenge Plus lessons in Art and Music

Our more able students in Years 7-10 were treated to some expert sessions in both art and music this term. Mr Malone delivered an inspiring session using traditional renaissance materials, charcoal, chalk, and toned paper to create some magical cast drawings that had both contrast and depth. Mr Mizen delivered an amazing session linking the playing and composition of music, to the brain regions that are engaged when doing so. It turns out playing music really does reduce anxiety, blood pressure, and pain as well as improve sleep quality, mood, mental alertness, and memory!



Coming soon....The Addams Family!

Next academic year, The Gryphon School is producing The Addams Family as our next school production! We are so excited to get started with the rehearsals beginning in September! In order to give students a feel for this production, as it is like no other show we have done before, a workshop took place for any students interested in participating, on Thursday 4th July. It was a fun filled day with a huge buzz created as students learnt key songs and dance numbers from the show! This workshop immersed the students into the Latin style of the songs and gave them a great challenge in learning complex dance steps and the challenging harmonies encapsulated in the show.

Following this, students will audition at the end of summer term for ensemble and lead roles. We are so pleased with the momentum and excitement so far for Addams!

Sixth Form

.7

TRIP TO TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Ten of our most able students visited Trinity Hall, a college of Cambridge University, as part of their outreach programme. The students engaged in academic sessions delivered by Cambridge research fellows on a variety of subjects including Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Law, Chemistry and Linguistics. Students then had workshops on interview techniques and a variety of tours of both Trinity Hall and Downton Colleges along with faculty experiences in The Arts and Humanities and the Sciences. The residential gave the students a superb insight into life at arguably the world's best university, inspiring them to put in competitive applications in the new academic year.



INDUCTION DAY

It was fantastic to be able to welcome prospective Sixth Form students to our annual taster day earlier this half term. Current Year 11 students from the Gryphon School and wider local North Dorset and South Somerset schools were able to experience a day in the life at Sixth Form. As part of the experience, they were able to get a taster for A Level lessons across their chosen subjects as well as meeting their future cohort. The day also aimed to support students in developing understanding and experience of their chosen subjects so that they may make informed choices about their future options and give themselves the best opportunity to flourish.

Student Success

Three Sixth Form students both, past and present, joined with Sherborne Girls school this year to broaden their experiences and gain a qualification in an additional language. Ella, Freddy and Thomas have shown fantastic commitment and worked well throughout this year which in turn has enabled them to complete their Entry Level Japanese Awards. All three students achieved double awards in Speaking and Listening plus Reading and Writing in Japanese (Entry 3). A fantastic achievement to add to their repertoire of skills. Congratulations to you all.



We also send further congratulations to Liv B and Hannah B in Year 13 who have both received the Sherborne Rotary Club Aubrey Allen Award for showing "Good Citizenship".

Liv was nominated following her hours spent across her numerous volunteering endeavours. A particular highlight being her work around raising awareness of sustainability. Through the organisation of a mock COP28 for both students in the Gryphon, the wider trust secondaries and the local primary schools Liv encouraged forward thinking around sustainability, as well as a huge community careers fair filled with sustainability-focused companies, raising both awareness and aspiration.

Hannah has been really involved in both the school and Sherborne Youth Council demonstrating outstanding youth leadership across the community. While upskilling herself across numerous roles and disciplines within the Youth Council, Hannah has also been working with young people to understand how they can effectively use their voice and share their views.

Visit to Merton College

23 of our most academically able Year 12 students visited Merton College Oxford, to experience what life would be like as an undergraduate student at the university. The students had a tour of the college and saw all the facilities that were on offer. The students gathered around 'Tolkien's table' and fittingly left good luck pennies on the 'good luck Gryphon' that is situated in the college grounds!

They had sessions on making an application to the university and importantly on how to approach and answer interview questions in their specific subject. During this session, students engaged brilliantly with the questions, each other and with the session leader. They were a credit to The Gryphon School and left a positive impression for any future applications that they might make.



DRAGONBOAT RACING

A mixture of students from Years 12 and 13 came together as a team to enter our first Dragonboat Race at the Sherborne Country fair this year. Despite an initial spell of awful weather, the team spirit wasn't dampened. Their teamwork and competitive nature grew throughout the initial race rounds and culminated in a nail biting 4-boat final which finished with a split-second difference for the 2nd and 3rd place! For a debut in the competition, coming away with a bronze medal was a fantastic achievement for the group.

P.E.

School Games Mark Award

We are delighted to announce that The Gryphon School, have achieved the School Games Silver Mark Award for the 2023/24 academic year. The School Games Mark is a government-led award scheme launched in 2012, facilitated by the Youth Sport Trust to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community, and we are delighted to have been recognised for our success.

With so many young people competing in local inter-school competitions this year, we are extremely proud of our pupils for their dedication to all aspects of school sport, including those young volunteers, leaders and officials who made our competitions possible. As part of our application, we were asked to fulfil criteria in the areas of participation, competition, workforce and clubs, and we are pleased that the hard work of everyone at our school has been rewarded this year.

A special thanks to all the staff who have run clubs and events, pupils who have taken part and to parents who have supported us at the events.

We look forward to applying once again in 2025!

U15 Girls Football

This summer the u15 girls football team had their county cup semi-final and carried on their national cup campaign, returning after the break in Round 5. They played some amazing football and scored some fantastic goals, their fight and desire to achieve success didn't falter in any match and they gave their all, no matter what the score was. Unfortunately, in the county cup semi-final, a tight game with only one goal separating the teams, the game went the way of our opponents who won the game 3-2. As for the National cup, a fantastic 3-1 away win in Southampton kicked things off in the right direction, where a sixth-round win quickly followed, taking them through to yet another semi-final. Despite them playing some



amazing football in the first half, creating chances and limiting the other team to only 1 or 2, they found themselves 1-0 down at half time. The girls started strong in the second half, bringing it back to 1-1, before hitting the crossbar when trying to find a second. However, it wasn't meant to be for us that day with our opponents scoring 2 late goals to win the match 3-1. Despite the setbacks it was a fantastic year for the team, and they will be back even stronger next year.

Cricket Trip

Forty students across three year groups attended Somerset County Ground to watch the second day of the test vs Warwickshire early in July. Somerset Cricket organise this as a school's day with activities around the ground and opportunities to meet and greet the players. The weather was not playing ball with the covers coming on early in the day, but they got a taster of a great few hours of cricket and were a credit to the school with their behaviour.



Sports Awards:

The Gryphon School Annual Sports Awards evening took place on Thursday 27th June. It is always a special event that recognises the commitment, dedication and performance that pupils from The Gryphon give to sport both inside and outside of school. We had a vast number of winners ranging from Players of the Year in traditional sports, such as rugby, hockey, football and netball, to more varied activities like archery and karting. The guest speaker was Bradley Axe who is a professional boxer. Brad spoke about how he got into boxing and the importance of picking yourself up when you get knocked down. This was a great message for all the pupils and parents to hear and will allow them all to move forward in their chosen sports. The biggest awards of the evening are reserved for a group of pupils who have shown brilliance in sport throughout the year. These included:

Individual Performer of the Year – Imogen (Year 11)

Team of the Year – Under 15 Girls Football Team

Junior Girls Sports Personality of the Year – Heidi (Year 8)

Junior Boys Sports Personality of the Year – Ralph (Year 9)

Senior Girls Sports Personality of the Year - Amy-May (Year 10)

Senior Boys Sports Personality of the Year – Ben (Year 11)

Rounders

The Year 7 team have shown incredible promise and enthusiasm. From their very first match, they demonstrated not only skill but also a deep understanding of teamwork and strategy. Their dedication to training paid off as they secured several wins in matches plus some spectacular burns and grazes. A special mention goes to Caspar, whose leadership and passion inspired the entire team. Year 7, you have set a high bar for future seasons, and we can't wait to see you grow and develop further.

Year 8's have had another great season of rounders and smashed their league games to secure a place in the final, which they unfortunately couldn't attend due to a

year group school trip. The team are such a pleasure to be around, with their energy, positivity, teamwork and desire to always pull out all the stops for the best team photo. Fingers crossed for the same success next season so we can make it to finals again.

Another successful rounders season for Years 9 and 10, who have played in a variety of league and friendly matches since April. As a team we have been working hard on finding the gaps in the field when batting and getting the double out, which the team have almost perfected!

Swimming

This term we were able to witness some of our talented students in the pool when we attended the North Dorset Schools Swimming Gala at Oxley Sports Centre. It was a pleasure to watch our students demonstrating their passion towards swimming and the hours of training they each spend in the pool. All of our students were absolutely fantastic with many top three results, but a particular shout out to our Year 8 team who finished 3rd overall despite only having 3 in their team and our Year 7 team who topped that by finishing 2nd, both of which helped us to achieve a 3rd place across all year groups against lots of tough competition.

