



Sherrardswood School

Looking to the Future II

September 2011

Welcome from the Chairman

Welcome back to those of you with children who are returning after the summer break, with a special welcome to those whose children are new to our school. We are looking forward to the new academic year and in this Newsletter will take the opportunity to share with you the outcome of the parental survey. We are extremely pleased with the number of parents who completed the survey with over 61% of the pupils represented in the replies. Many thanks to all of you who participated—your views are very important to us.

The parent governor elections took place and I am pleased to announce that Tara Petri and David Chapman have joined the Governing Body with Tara taking on the role of Chair of the Finance Committee. Governors have been busy over the summer working with the Senior Management Team to plan ac-



tivities in response to the findings from the survey.

It has been another year of excellent examination results for all participating pupils. 17.5% of those taking GCSE's achieved an A*, with a further 24% getting an A grade which is a record for the school and significantly higher than the national average. 82%

of those taking Physics, Chemistry and Biology achieved an A* or an A grade which is an outstanding achievement. 100% of those taking A levels passed, with 64% getting a B grade or better with two students getting three A* grades each. All of them achieving a place at the University of their choice. My congratulations, with those of my Governor colleagues, go to all of the pupils and their teachers who worked together to achieve these exceptional results. We would like to wish those pupils leaving us every success in the future—I know that their Sherrardswood education will give them a firm foundation for their future studies.

My thanks to all, particularly Lynda for another successful year.

Justin Phillips

A Note from the Headteacher

I was extremely pleased to receive so many positive comments about the school in the responses to the parental survey. You clearly value our focus on achievement and this will still be the main priority for us, along with the quality of pastoral care and educational support that you identified as equally important to you. I was pleased to note that you rated Sherrardswood high on both of these factors. In fact you rated Sherrardswood well on all of the factors that you used to choose a school for your children and this is very encouraging.

Of course you identified some areas for further development and we will be working on these during this academic year. We have been discussing your views as a staff team and have been planning our response to them. This Newsletter details your views and some of the plans that we have developed so far to try and meet your needs more effectively.

I am excited by the many changes that we will be implementing in the new academic year in response to the parental survey. I will look forward to providing you with regular updates on how our plans are developing and will also report on the implementation of these ideas.

Lynda Corry

Being a more Family Friendly School

From the survey we established that many parents (82.5% of respondents) are keen to see some changes to the range of after school activities and a later finishing time for them. Some parents would also like the bus service to have additional drop off times when school activities are finished for the day. In response we have a new and improved range of clubs this term; cheerleading, gymnastics Lego and construction for Lockleys's children and dance, badminton, the Sherrardswood Aeronautical And Space Agency (SASA) and the physics engineering club for Mimram pupils.

The programme is being circulated on Friday 9th September and we would appreciate you encouraging your children to participate.



This is only the beginning we will, over the next few weeks, be reviewing how and when we deliver school clubs and the range of after school activities and will be preparing some proposals with a view to implementing some changes, for example golf and the Survival Forest club, in the near future.

Some of you requested that Breakfast Club start earlier each day. Therefore, from the 12th September, we will open breakfast club at 7.30am for all pupils who would find it helpful to be on site before 8.30 each day. More details on how to participate will be sent in a separate letter.



Many of you commented on the need to maximise the number of days that the school is open for teaching so this academic year we have increased the days by one week. We will also reduce the number of days we are closed for bad weather where we can.



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To enable you to have the quality of care you have come to expect from Sherrardswood, throughout the year, we will explore extending the Barracudas holiday club for more weeks of the year. We will also be introducing a holiday club for younger children led by a professional Play Worker—a new role in Sherrardswood and will be trialing this at Half Term (October). Please watch out for information on how your children can participate. Children from the Nursery and Reception classes will have provision tailored to meet their needs.

Many of you (73%) told us that if the buildings and grounds were available for events like children's parties you are likely to use them. We will therefore task our new Marketing and Business Development Manager with putting in place systems and processes to enable this to happen.

We will work closely with the schools excellent PTA on this and other opportunities to for parents and children to mix socially— something that many of you said you would value.

Enhancing the Curriculum

We will introduce of a 'forest school' for the reception class this term with children in Infants participating in the Spring term.

We found out from you that you would like to see a wider range of sporting activities available to your children from Years 4 to 13 and that you are prepared to pay a little extra (82% of respondents) for these if they are stimulating. We will begin expanding the opportunities after half term.

You told us that the 6th form might be more attractive to potential students if the opportunities to socialise and participate in extra-curricular activities were increased so we will explore how best to achieve this and engage the 6th formers in planning how it might work for them.

Improving Buildings and Grounds

We have begun our refurbishment programme over the summer with some redecoration in the Lockley's communal areas. We are seeking specialists to redecorate the Lockley's entrance hall so that we retain some of the historical features—more about that in a future newsletter.

Better Communication with You

We had an excellent response to our advertisement for Marketing and Business Development Manager and will be interviewing shortly. We will keep you posted. In the survey you told us that we should reduce paper communications, rationalise 'Parentmail', ensure the website is up to date and more user friendly and that we should respond more quickly to queries and calls.

We have appointed a new company to manage our website and will be working on all of the areas you raised over the coming months. We will be making changes to our administrative functions so that they are able to operate more effectively while still maximising our resources at the interface with pupils.

Your Action is Needed

Please support the Fun Day on the 17th September.

Please read the Activities programme booklet circulated on 9th September and encourage your child to participate in as many of the activities as possible.

If your child is in Lockleys please look out for the details of our first Holiday Club scheduled to take place in the October Half Term—please sign up and support this new venture.

Sign your child up for breakfast club if you would like them to be in the school grounds before the start of the school day.

Keep a look out for our next 'Looking to the Future' Newsletter so that you are up to date with the changes that we will be implementing this academic year.

Thank you for reading our Newsletter



Please support our **Fun Day** scheduled for Saturday **17th September** from 2.00pm. For more information visit the PTA section on our website .