



26th January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Co-Curricular Opportunities

The school seems as busy as ever at the moment. Next week three chess teams are entered for a competition against other schools in Bristol, whilst at the same time the rehearsals for the school production, which takes place just after half term, are in full flow and sporting events continue. It has been lovely to see a good number of students working with our outdoor education team, enjoying the experience of being out in the Mendips into the dark evening where they have been practicing their night navigation and other skills.

Last week also brought with it a successful lunchtime clothes swap event orchestrated by our Environment Team who have sustainability and recycling at the heart of the work that they do. We continue to talk about students making sure they grasp and make the most of the many opportunities that the school offers and if parents and carers are able to talk about this at home, that would be brilliant.

Attendance Visit by Baroness Barran

The school was contacted by the Department for Education to see if we would be able to host a visit by Baroness Barran who is a minister for education as a result of the work we have done around improving attendance in our school.

Attendance is something we are constantly working on alongside parents and carers following the return from the pandemic. I am not sure that we always get everything right in this area, however the Baroness and other staff from the DfE who accompanied her on the visit last week noted that the warm welcome to the students and a key sense of belonging were key aspects of why this was seemingly going well. In addition, the school featured on BBC Points West both at lunchtime and the evening slot on the day of the visit on an item which covered the national topic of attendance in school.

Reading at Chew Valley

We have been working on a strategy for some time to build on our existing provision for reading for all students. The opportunity to continue to develop reading and also to build a strong vocabulary in all subject areas are some of the biggest levers in improving all students' opportunity to succeed in the future.

We have built our programme around the work of the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) who have looked at evidence informed practice in the recommendations they make and I have shared the link here if you are interested in this - ([Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools | EEF \(educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk\)](https://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk)). Students have the opportunity to read in a structured programme in tutor time along with departments focusing on key words in their subject and looking at the etymology or the origin of the words that appear in their curriculum.

The Library has a key role to play in our provision. We have purchased a range of new books over the last year and put in place Accelerated Reader, a reading programme for Year 7 and 8 which signposts students to books that are likely to be able to move them forwards. Students also have dedicated Library lessons at KS3. In addition to this, we have some clear catch programmes run by staff for those students who need a little more input with their reading.

Our School Improvement Partner, who works alongside Lighthouse Schools Partnership staff, spent a day in early January reviewing our work and we were really pleased with the feedback on what we

have achieved so far. As parents and carers, please do encourage your children to continue to read for pleasure as we value this so much when perhaps time is often diverted to social media.

World War I Comes Alive at Chew Valley School

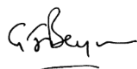
Students studying History in Year 9 and 11 had the opportunity to be involved in a World War I experience recently here in school. Using the latest technology visual experience glasses, the students were transported to the trenches during the war and were able to experience first-hand what life was like. It was great for students to be able to do this within our own school site.

School Strategy until 2028

Attached with this letter is a communication from our Chair of Governors, Sheila Williams, about the strategy for the school for the forthcoming years which has been finalised recently. Please do have a read through both the letter and the document within it which will give you a flavour of what we will be focusing on in the future. My thanks to the governing body and all stakeholders who were involved in the production of this.

As ever, please do make contact if there is anything you would like to discuss with us. In the meantime thank you for your continuing support.

With very best wishes,



Gareth Beynon
Headteacher

Key Dates

Thursday 1st February

Monday 12th to Friday 16th February

Monday 19th February

Thursday 7th March

Wednesday 27th March

Thursday 28th March

Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April

Thursday 2nd May

Wednesday 22nd May

Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May

Monday 17th June to Friday 21st June

Thursday 20th June

Thursday 27th June

Tuesday 2nd July

Tuesday 23rd July

Year 11 Parents' Evening

Half Term

INSET Day

Year 12 Parents' Evening

Meet with Tutors in school

INSET Day

Easter Holidays

Year 8 Parents' Evening

Year 7 Parents' Evening

Half Term

Enrichment Week

Year 12 Information for Parents Evening

Sixth Form Induction

Year 6 Induction

End of the Summer Term