



## *Shipston High School Newsletter: September 2024*

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you and your families have enjoyed the summer, and that your children are refreshed and ready for learning at Shipston High School. Term has begun well as students return and our new year 7 are especially welcome.

### **New staff**

This September we welcome Mrs Bradley to the school. Mrs Bradley joins us as Associate Assistant Headteacher: Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO). She is an experienced SENDCO and is a very welcome addition to our staff team.

Several existing staff start the year with new roles. Mrs Beatty is Head of academic standards for year 9 and 10, and Mr Shaw takes on the new role of Pastoral Engagement Lead. Mrs Freeman extends her role as a senior teacher, now as Assistant Head Teacher for data and interventions.

### **Exam results**

The school has enjoyed a further set of impressive GCSE results this summer, with the year 11 students performing extremely well as individuals and across the year group.

Shipston High School has secured top grades across the subject range. Progress has been excellent, with students often exceeding their expected outcomes. I would like to congratulate all the young people, and thank staff and parents for all of their work and support.

These results demonstrate how well young people do when they are in a positive school environment and a culture of support and hard work. Students have performed extremely well, and we wish them well in future endeavours.

### **Year 11**

Our year 11 students are now focussed on their final year of study. Full GCSE examinations are planned for spring 2025, which is little more than two terms away. Students should continue to work with staff in preparation for those examinations, trusting the guidance they receive from a skilled and experienced teaching team. Year 11 students always start

the term with real focus, and I am sure this cohort will maintain this commitment throughout the year.

The school will invite families to a year 11 parents' evening in October, and later in the autumn all year 11 students will have an individual meeting with senior and pastoral staff to review progress and set the agenda for year 11 study. These conversations will occur during the school day, and will be motivating and study focussed as staff support students to achieve in winter mock exams.

### **Site development**

Families will be aware of the progress being made on site following the news that Shipston High School has been awarded improvement and expansion investment worth over £10 million. The school is grateful to Warwickshire County Council for this fantastic opportunity. Work has continued over the summer, and we are already receiving new spaces for students to enjoy. Refurbished technology areas are now in use, and work now moves to the science department. There will be evidence of the work continuing, but the timetable is unaffected and lessons will continue as normal.

We will keep families informed regarding the progress of the project and relevant practical information as we maintain safe and effective school operation throughout the construction period.

### **Site access**

Shipston High School hosts over 600 students, and is a busy site. We therefore ask that parents do not come onto the school site at the start or end of the school day unless by prior arrangement. When attending for an appointment, please arrive at the main reception located in our newest building at the top of the drive. If you are visiting by car, please note that we have very limited parking on site; please only use the marked parking spaces along the drive and behind the maths classrooms.

At the close of the school day, the school driveway is very busy with pupils and buses. Parents should not drive onto the school site at this time, and we ask that any parents meeting children in person wait near to the school gate by Hay Meadow rather than coming onto the drive. This is enormously helpful in managing a safe and orderly departure for all pupils.

### **Contacting school**

You are welcome to contact the school at any time with your enquiries. In order to help you to get the most informed response, please note that questions regarding learning are best

directed to the appropriate head of department. Pastoral or general questions should be directed to the relevant form tutor or head of academic standards. You will appreciate that staff are usually teaching classes, so please telephone the school to arrange a suitable time for your enquiry to be addressed. Please do not come into school in the expectation of speaking to staff without an appointment, as colleagues are unlikely to be available without prior arrangement. Where a meeting is necessary, appointments can be scheduled. Please contact the school office who will make the necessary arrangements.

### **Parents' association**

Shipston High School is keen to develop an active parents' association now that the restrictions of the pandemic are behind us. Historically the school has enjoyed a thriving group that works with staff to generate social and fundraising activities that benefit both the school and the wider community.

Some parents have already expressed an interest in contributing, along with some initial ideas for activities. If any parents are interested in getting involved, please contact Charlotte Daubney and [CDaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk](mailto:CDaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk), and we will then look to get people together for an initial meeting in early October. Parents and family members from all year groups are welcome. Many thanks.

### **The Three Rivers Alliance**

We have previously shared with families that Shipton High School is working closely with several local secondary schools in order to share best practice and support children across the schools. I am pleased to inform you that the group is now named The Three Rivers Alliance.

The Stratford Herald newspaper recently published an article on the alliance, and extract from which is here:

*Five Warwickshire schools have come together to form a unique alliance. 2024 sees the launch of the new Three Rivers Alliance of secondary schools, a mutually supportive and developmental alliance.*

*Alcester Academy, Alcester Grammar School, King Edward VI School, Shipston High School and Stratford Girls' Grammar School have formed an alliance with the aim of sharing good practice and improving the quality of education for students of secondary age.*

*"The educational environment has seen a growth in Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) in recent times." elaborated Gavin Saunders, Headteacher at Shipston High School. "The Three Rivers Alliance is taking a different approach. This is an exciting alliance of successful schools retaining their independence as Single Academy Trusts whilst uniting with a shared energy and drive to generate excellence across the group."*

Shipston High School is proud to be working with this group of excellent schools, and I have no doubt that all students will benefit from this alliance and the high standards of education it represents.

### **Forthcoming events**

Year 7 and Year 11 pupils will have formal photographs taken in school on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September.

Our annual open evening for prospective parents for 2025 entry will be held between 6.00pm and 8.00pm on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Many students volunteer to assist with this evening, and we will provide more details nearer to the event.

The school will also run an open morning for families currently in year 6 between 9.00am and 10.30 am on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. As the school is in operation on this day, families do need to book a place in advance, please contact [CDaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk](mailto:CDaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk) if you would like to attend.

Year 7 parents will receive communication in October regarding how children have settled in their first few weeks in the school. However, please do contact the school at any time if you have questions regarding your child.

All families will receive school reports as the year proceeds. We are planning to further improve the format of our written reports this year as we know the value of effective communication regarding academic progress. Our revised praise and rewards system has started well, and families should be receiving useful information via Edulink. Please download the app if you have not yet had the chance to get connected with Edulink. Any problems accessing this, please contact the school office.

All students know that the hard work starts straight away, and I am pleased to state that the term has begun with real focus thanks to the excellent attitude of our young people.

Yours sincerely,



G. Saunders