

# SUNNYDOWN SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mr Paul Jensen B.Ed Grad Dip (SEBD) NPQH



## Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear all who are associated with Sunnydown,

Sunnydown is so much more than a school that simply follows the National Curriculum. It is an educational facility that delivers world class opportunities for young men who may not receive such opportunities in a mainstream environment. The approach is strategic and very well considered, and successful. It is designed carefully with high aspirations for each child to perform to the best of their respective abilities.

For example, as part of the Friday curriculum in each session the boys have opportunities to enhance their own development in areas such as resilience, independence and cooperation. Testimony to the success of this approach is that Year 7O were able to enjoy a hot chocolate in a BBQ Hut set in landscaped gardens that the students themselves helped realise. This, after preparing an area for decking as part of the animal husbandry project. How many newsletters across the country can speak of such events as readily as ours?

Further evidence of the success of our collaborative and strategic approach were the levels of participation and sportsmanship in the football tournament on Thursday. Many congratulations to all participants with a special mention to Antony Harper and Finley Marley, respective 'Sportsman' of each team.

Placed in a different school many of the students who participated in either of these two events (there are many more examples even just this week) may not have been given an opportunity. However, here they have and now they own memories and skills that will last a lifetime. This is preparation for life after Sunnydown. This is at the heart of Sunnydown.

Based on our model our curriculum is wider and more enjoyable than ever. No student has missed out on an opportunity to study a GCSE of their choice. No student has not had the GCSE grades nor subjects needed to successfully transition from Sunnydown. We offer a bespoke pathway to each child through their Sunnydown journey, and we deliver. What measure of success do we have? Most importantly it is the levels of satisfaction, happiness and safety of your sons. When they are happy to come to school and leave with smiles, something must be working. Consider the primary school experience of your son and compare.

Further evidence of the success of our approach, and the dedication of my incredible staff, are the KS4 outcomes and destinations post Sunnydown. When compared with the academic progress made by students in other Special Schools nationally, Sunnydown has been one of the best performing maintained Special Schools and in the top 5 of all Special

Schools for several years. Our Progress 8 score also outperforms local secondary schools. Our graduates continue to come back - Oscar Robson, who now attends college, returns to paint a graffiti wall as part of our Cycle Scheme. James Morrison continues to benefit from being part of our PE team when he is not at college. The list is long.

Evidence that the students are able to embrace what we offer was no more clear than on Thursday and Friday when the seniors attempted Functional Skills exams in both Maths and English. The effort they put in was a clear culmination of the support they have received in KS3 from school and home, to be the resilient young men who worked so diligently through these challenging public exams.

I have every confidence that your sons have the best opportunity of future success by attending Sunnydown. Many of your stories are testimony to your belief in our approach as well. Thank you.

This does not mean that we are prepared to coast and not explore ways of improving further.

Our recent Ofsted inspection has certainly sharpened our focus in some areas. When the report is finally published by Ofsted, I am confident that their findings will be able to be read in context by the school community.

As already demonstrated, our outcomes and destination data is excellent. Students are happy. When a child is unhappy, or emotional, perhaps anxious, the level of care they receive is second to none. It is through our level of care and nurture, carefully scaffolded to help your son grow into the person he can, that your son learns so much from the excellent teaching that goes on every day.

Based on some Ofsted observations (none of which were news to me) I could increase the amount of homework; I could increase the subjects taught; I could increase the school day to allow more teaching; I could demand more planning from my staff, but at what cost and for what gain?

To achieve some Ofsted recommendations, either funding must increase or our current provision changes. Others can be achieved creatively. My reassurance to families is that I will reflect on all recommendations for improvement, whether from Ofsted or more importantly from families, students and staff. Any changes however must have the best interests of the children at heart, resulting in improved life chances post Sunnydown. Furthermore, student welfare and wellbeing remains our focus, upon which academic outcomes are realised.

Our philosophy is based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. A recent article in a secondary education publication called SecEd is below should you have a moment to reflect.

<https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/case-study-boosting-pastoral-support-using-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-send-mental-health-pupil-wellbeing-transition/>

There are several mentions of our House point system in the newsletter today. Developing a sense of belonging improves self confidence and reduces anxiety. Both of these lead to improved outcomes.

Despite the collective efforts of school staff and families, on occasion our boys may make mistakes. We as a school will make mistakes. Individuals will make mistakes. Families will make mistakes - parenting is no walk in the park!



Nor is education. From these mistakes we learn. Reassuringly, mistakes of all shapes and sizes are experienced here regularly, but we are committed to helping everyone involved to learn from them.

On that note, I wish you all a wonderful weekend of fireworks and family time.

Paul Jensen - Proud Headteacher of Sunnydown, a transformative school.

### Inter-House competitions

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Inter-House Killer competition (basketball shooting knockout game). All 4 Houses demonstrated incredible sportsmanship and camaraderie and it made for a fantastic end to the last half term!

Congratulations to Teddy Foster of Portley who won the KS3 competition, George Hodgson leading the way as Captain of Burntwood who won the KS4 competition and last, but not least, Mrs Wicking who on her last day won the staff competition securing extra points for Burntwood.



### House Point reward trips

Due to the challenges presented by Covid we have been unable to run House Point trips for some time. I'm delighted to announce that our records show that all 4 Houses are due a trip which we will endeavor to honour before we break up for Christmas. House meetings led by the House Captains and Vice Captains were held on Tuesday of this week whereby the teams voted for their preferred reward trip from a list of four options. The teams have voted for the following trips:

**Burntwood** - A trip to the Guildford Spectrum Swimming

**Buxton** - A trip to a Trampoline park

**Portley** - A trip to a Trampoline park

**Whyteleafe** - A trip to a Trampoline park

House Point trips are a reflection of your collective and consistent efforts as a team, so congratulations to all four Houses!

This term the students will have the opportunity to compete in a mental maths Kahoot quiz, a dodgeball competition, a badminton tournament and a Christmas related art competition.

Mr Wright

### SSSSA KS3 Football League day

On Thursday of this week many of our KS3 Footballers had the opportunity to compete in a Football league day at Fulham FC's Motspur Park training centre. It was such a privilege to watch our students competing and enjoying their sport at such an incredible venue. With so much interest in the event the teams were divided into 3 leagues.

#### **Team 1 - Competing in the Premier League**

*James Millar (Y9), Oscar Stewart (Y9), Josh Benton (Y9), Alex Hennessey (Y9), Kieran Kirk (Y9), Jamie Rogers (Y9) and Antony Harper (Y8).*



Sunnydown faced off against Nightingale community academy and enjoyed it so much they did it four times.

**Match 1** We won 4-0, with a hat trick by Jamie and a goal by James

**Match 2** Was a tight game, lost 1-0

**Match 3** Was a return to victory with a 3-1, 1 goal for Jamie and two for James

**Match 4** Was a 2-0 loss

After the match the boys had to pick their player of the tournament and votes were as follows:

James M: Jamie was the star player because of his scoring and good positioning

Jamie: Kieran because he made some good saves

Kieran: AJ because he worked hardest

Josh: AJ because he is the youngest and he got better through the matches

AJ: Oscar because he did lots of good blocks

Alex: AJ because he got better and better each game

Oscar: AJ

Mr Thompson: Alex showed good footwork and made good blocks

Alumni Coach James Morrison: Oscar didn't have a single bad game and was calm

Gabe: Josh and Jamie did really well staying calm and showing good sportsmanship when some tough challenges came in.

**Sportsman of the day** - Congratulations to **Antony Harper!**

All the boys behaved brilliantly and we won the sporting award as well as topping the (mini) league table. Well done to all the boys!

**Gabe**

**Team 2 - Competing in League One**



*Sonny Burgess (Y8), Teddy Foster (Y8), Max Gibbins (Y8), Finley Marley (Y8), Jayden Smurthwaite (Y8), Callum Annis (Y7), Luke Dean (Y7), Harry Franklin (Y7), and Bailey Goodliffe (Y7).*



Team 2 (competing in their first Football match together for the school) faced a very good Wishmore Cross School and quickly went 2 goals down. The team grew in confidence in the second half and managed to get a goal back. Luke Dean scored a superb goal after some good interplay with Teddy Foster. Despite a strong second half the game finished 2-1 to Wishmore Cross.

A dominant performance from Sunnydown, the second game resulted in a draw with Blossom House A team largely due to an incredible performance from their goalkeeper but the team were really starting to play well.

With every game you could see the confidence and team spirit growing. In the 3rd game it all came together and we secured a 6-1 victory against Carew Academy with goals from Teddy Foster, Luke Dean, Harry Franklin and Finley Marley. The attacking play was built on an incredible defensive effort from Max Gibbins, Sonny Burgess, Bailey Goodliffe and Callum Annis.

In the final group match against Blossom House the team finished strong and an early goal from Jayden Smurthwaite after some quick feet to beat his defender set us on the path to a 2-1 victory.

The team had packed up and were starting to leave when the organiser told us that we had qualified for the final. The team threw off their coats and excitedly ran back onto the pitch raring to go. The team showed incredible energy considering it was their 5<sup>th</sup> game of the day and created some excellent chances, but once again came up against a goalkeeper in form. The game finished a draw which meant it would be decided by the dreaded penalties! Sudden death penalties! Teddy Foster made an incredible reaction save which meant that if we scored we would be crowned

champions of League One! Harry Franklin stepped up to take the penalty. Under immense pressure with a wall of excited noise around him he calmly fired the ball through the Goalkeepers legs securing the title for the team! Let the celebrations begin!

I'm incredibly proud of the way the team played football and grew as a team throughout the day. I'm particularly proud of the way they conducted themselves throughout the day demonstrating fantastic sportsmanship, resilience, cooperation and importantly respect for everyone involved.

**Sportsman of the day** - All the players were a pleasure to take out today but congratulations this time go to **Finley Marley**! Well done Finley!

Mr Wright

### Friday Curriculum

Well done to 7O for a huge effort in clearing the forest area by the chickens in preparation for a decking observation area to be built in the coming weeks. This is part of the animal husbandry project. 7O were treated to hot chocolate in the BBQ Hut for their efforts.



Mr Moody

### SMSC


On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November, we will take part in a commemoration service to honour our Armed Forces and veterans who have made sacrifices to protect us.

Miss Drake

### 100% Attendance

Congratulations to 7N for achieving 100% attendance for w/e 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Scientist of the Week</u></b></p> <p>The recipient of Scientist of the Week, awarded by Mr Cybuch for resilience is:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thomas Bodkin (10J)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Mathematician of the Week</u></b></p> <p>The recipient of Mathematician of the Week, awarded by Mr Zadok for having a positive attitude in lessons is:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Liam Tushingham (10P)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Artist of the Week</u></b></p> <p>The recipient of Artist of the Week, awarded by Mrs Ogle and Miss Adams for a fantastic Google slide document on Pablo Picasso is:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Alfie Monk (7N)</b></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Thought for this week</u></b> <b><u>(W/C: 1<sup>st</sup> November)</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Looking after ourselves - Movember and emotional health</b></p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Thought for w/c:</u></b> <b><u>(W/C: 8<sup>th</sup> November)</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Remembrance - Remembering those lost</b></p> <p>On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November, we will take part in a commemoration service to honour our Armed Forces and veterans who have made sacrifices to protect us.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>In Flanders' Fields</u></b></p> <p>In Flanders' fields the poppies blow Between the crosses, row on row, That mark our place: and in the sky The larks, still bravely singing, fly Scarce heard amid the guns below. We are the dead. Short days ago We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie In Flanders' fields. Take up our quarrel with the foe; To you from failing hands we throw The torch; be yours to hold it high, If ye break faith with us who die We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders' Fields.</p>
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House Points (certificates will be given on Monday)

Alex Hennessy	500 House Points
Alife Wilson	200 House Points

Friday Curriculum: 12/11/21

A timetable of events will go out next week via Parentmail.