



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

STUDENT VOICES



SEPTEMBER EDITION

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**FEATURING NEW SECTIONS, CHALLENGES,
ARTICLES AND MORE!**



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

EDITOR'S NOTE

Hello, I hope you've all had a great start to the new school year! For any new readers here, this is the Sharples Spotlight and I'm Amaara (the editor), responsible for making sure that there is a new edition every month. Before I start rushing into all the changes, I would first like to thank all the contributors to this month's copy of the Spotlight. If it wasn't for them there truly wouldn't be a Spotlight, after all what is a newspaper without its writers. Secondly, I would like to thank you, our lovely reader who I'm hoping will continue to read each new edition every month. As you are the reason we keep publishing.

Now with all our thanks out of the way I just want to note a few changes to the Spotlight that should hopefully begin to make it tailored to as many of you as possible. Now for all our readers from last year, you may pick up, almost immediately, when you start to read this month's articles that there is a very new layout. This has been done so that we can explore different, more creative options that you as readers find more interesting. However, if you don't like it you can tell us about it in the monthly survey.

Speaking of which, this is a new thing for this year, with every new Spotlight edition there will be a monthly survey that goes out alongside it. This survey is to see what you as readers do and don't like. There will be some simple yes or no questions on there alongside questions about what you may want to see more of or less of in each new edition.

For instance, every month you will now be able to vote on your favourite article. This not only helps me understand what you like to read so I know what to include in new editions but it also means that I can reward the writers of your favourite articles. The survey will also ask you whether or not you like the new layout so for next month we can decide whether we need to have another reboot or carry on using this one.

Either way, this year we want the Spotlight to be the best it can but we can only do this if you give us your opinions. So, after you are done reading this amazing edition, be sure to fill in the Survey so we can make the Spotlight as perfect as possible for you.

As always I hope you enjoy this incredible new edition of the Sharples Spotlight and if you like what you see and want to join our team then be sure to send me an email at: 22mangeraa@sharplesschool.co.uk Happy reading!

BY AMAARA MANGERA - EDITOR



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

Buzzing with Excitement:

The Year 7 Freshers Fair!

Earlier this month, our school theatre was transformed into a thrilling opportunity as the annual Freshers Fair welcomed the Year 7s. The Freshers Fair was an introduction to the school's baccalaureate programme, which includes a list of clubs aiming to enrich students across the Year with their favourite hobbies. The baccalaureate programme isn't just about involving oneself by attending clubs, but it is an opportunity for new starters to interact, make new friends and discover numerous interests.

From the moment you entered, an atmosphere of joy, excitement and cheer, elated the theatre. With stalls scattered across the hall, each one inviting students to participate in a different club or extracurricular activity. This year at Sharples, there were a number of clubs available for the Year 7s, allowing each one of them to find something they truly enjoy doing. There was something for everyone, from 3D printing to darts, gardening club, calculated colouring, and much more. Every pupil at Sharples was given an opportunity to sign up to an activity of their choice and get a sense of what each club had on offer for them.



One Year 7 student shared her thoughts on the day:

"As soon as I walked into the theatre, the atmosphere was buzzing and I rushed with excitement to sign up for the clubs on offer. As I passed by each stall, exploring, deciding what activities to choose. My friends and I signed up for the gardening club and the art club; I can't wait to start! Everyone was so friendly, and I even made a new friend while we were looking at the art club stall. I'm really thrilled to get started!"

For new Year 7s, it's a meaningful way to start their school journey with excitement and purpose. It gives every student the chance to explore different hobbies, meet people of similar interests, and make the most of the amazing opportunities Sharples has to offer.

Not to forget, by attending clubs and engaging in the activities, students will be given reward points to add to their baccalaureate club trackers. The students with the most reward points will be treated at the end of the term. We encourage all Year 7 students to participate, have fun!

BY SAFIYYAH PATEL

From one screen to another:

This month we have many new titles hitting the screens, ones that are most certainly bound to take a hold on your heart, so here they are, a wide variety to pick from.

THE CONJURING - LAST RITES

GENRE: HORROR

TIME: 2H 15M

AGE RATING: 15

BILLY ELLIOT

GENRE: DANCE / MUSICAL

TIME: 1H 50M

AGE RATING: 15

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON

GENRE: ADVENTURE / FANTASY

TIME: 2H 5M

AGE RATING: 12

THE FANTASTIC FOUR: FIRST STEPS

GENRE: ACTION / SCI - FI

TIME: 1H 54M

AGE RATING: 12



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YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE IDEAS:

With the work experience deadline approaching quickly here are some ideas to get you started, just find your favourite subjects and have a take a look at what you could possibly do.

Maths:

- Engineering firms - using maths in measurements and technical drawings
- Bolton council - planning or data analysis teams
- Local banks or finance departments - handling numbers and accounts

History:

- Bolton museum & Art gallery - working with historical collections
- Hall i' th' Wood - heritage and museum support
- Horwich heritage centre or bolton steam museum - local history projects

English:

- Bolton central library and museum- helping with reading programmes or writing for newsletters
- Bolton news - writing articles or helping with journalism tasks
- Local youth groups/schools- supporting literacy workshops or mentoring younger pupils

RS/PSHE:

- Local charities and community centres - supporting people and events
- Faith organisations in Bolton - helping with outreach and activities
- Bolton council social services - learning about community work

Sciences (biology chemistry physics):

- Royal bolton hospital - labs, pathology, diagnostics and healthcare science
- University of Bolton science departments - shadowing lab technicians and researchers.
- Nature reserves/ environmental groups - conversation projects and fieldwork

Geography:

- Bolton council - planning, mapping and sustainability work
- Bolton at home - looking after land and green spaces
- Nature reserves/parks (like moss bank park) - conservation and visitor support



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Spanish/French (languages):

- Local schools- assisting in language lessons
- Cultural/ language centres in greater manchester
- Businesses with international links - import/export or customer service

Performing arts:

- Octagon theatre (bolton) - backstage, production or front of house
- Stagecoach performing arts- youth theatre support
- University of the bolton school of the arts - drama workshops or production

Engineering :

- Merlin engineering or HA england engineers - design and manufacturing
- Bolton council - civil or structural engineering teams
- University of engineering faculty - projects and workshops

PE/Sport:

- Bolton one leisure centre - coaching and fitness
- Local schools or sport clubs - supporting PE lessons or teams
- Health charities - running fitness or wellbeing events

Computing:

- IT departments in schools or colleges - helping with technical support
- Local software or web design companies - shadowing developers and designers
- Bolton council (IT services) - working with technology in a large organisation

Music :

- Bolton music service - teaching,events and workshops
- Local studios or community radio (e.g. Bolton FM) - sound and production
- Concert venues or churches - helping with music events

Food tech :

- Local restaurants or cafes - kitchen and food prep
- Food manufacturing businesses - production and packaging
- Community kitchens or charity projects - preparing and serving meals

Textiles:

- Textile/fashion companies in greater manchester
- University of bolton - fashion & textile design departments
- Theatres - costume and stage clothing departments

Art:

- Bolton museum & art gallery - exhibitions and art collections
- Local galleries or artists studios - creative workshops
- University of bolton school of the arts - supporting art projects



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

Why should YOU join the Spotlight?

BY AAMIRA VALLI

Unleash Your Creativity Writing for Sharples Spotlight lets you explore a variety of topics that interest you. Whether you're passionate about sports, arts, school events, or student opinions, there's a space for your voice and creativity to flourish.

Building Valuable Skills Being part of the newspaper team isn't just fun; it's educational! You'll develop strong writing, editing, and communication skills. Plus, it's a great way to learn about media, journalism, and teamwork—valuable skills that will help you in any career.

Make Your Voice Heard Have an opinion on school policies or an interesting story to tell? Writing for the newspaper is a powerful way to express your thoughts, share important news, and engage your fellow students with stories that matter.

Meet New Friends Joining the Sharples Spotlight team means being part of a community of fellow writers and thinkers. You'll collaborate on articles, share ideas, and make friends who share your passion for writing.

Make an Impact Your articles can inspire change, start conversations, and bring attention to causes you believe in. The newspaper platform gives you the opportunity to make a positive impact in your school community.

Join Us Next Term! If you're ready to dive into the world of writing and journalism, come join Sharples Spotlight next term. It's a fantastic way to make your mark on the school and have a lot of fun doing it!

We can't wait to see what stories you'll bring to the next issue. For more information, reach out to our team or come to our next meeting. We look forward to having you onboard!

Bolton Food festival

BY KHAREEMAH MUSA

From Friday the 22nd of August, to the 25th August was the Food Festival in Bolton town centre. With everything from lemonades, to korean corndogs, visitors sampled delicacies from around the globe , while enjoying live music, and family-friendly activities. The aroma of sizzling street food, sweet pastries, freshly brewed coffee filled the air. This year commenced the 19th food festival, with hundreds of thousands of visitors who came together enjoying over 200 stalls. Children took part in cookery sessions, chocolate making, arts and crafts, and well-being zones such as the "Festival Garden".

Festival organisers called the weekend a success. Council leaders noted the positive economic and cultural impact of the event, especially for local producers and town-centres business. The moment you step into the heart of the food festivals, you're greeted by a buzz of energy that pulses through the crowd. Laughter blends with the sizzle of grills, the clatter of pans, and the hum of live music drifting through the air. Families meander between stalls, children holding candyfloss or licking melting ice creams. People chat with stallholders, who beam with pride as they explain their homemade sauces or locally sourced ingredients. There's a sense that everyone belongs-whether you're a food lover, a curious tourist, or a local out for a good day. It's not just about eating;it's about celebration, connection and the simple joy of sharing food together.

If you missed it this year, no need to worry, because the food festival will commence again in Bolton town centre next year



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Legally Blonde: The musical

Every year, the Performing Arts Department chooses a musical that students can audition for and eventually act and sing in. This year, the musical that was chosen was Legally Blonde. Of course, we're doing the Jr. version of the musical because we're 'young performers', but due to it being a condensed version of the play, several songs were cut from the original so sorry to anyone who was waiting to hear them, you'll just have to use Spotify instead.



SOURCE: LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL - WEBSITE

Legally Blonde follows Elle Woods, the Delta Nu sorority girl who had her heart broken by her high school sweetheart, Warner Huntington III. Elle then somehow makes it to Harvard Law with one goal in mind, winning back Warner. Unfortunately, disaster strikes as Elle learns that Warner has a new girlfriend, Vivienne Kensington. Chaos ensues as Elle has to learn that instead of pursuing love, she could maybe pursue a career as a lawyer. It won't be easy, of course ; she'll have seemingly the entire world against her. But if she puts her head in some books for once, and finds her inner lawyer, then perhaps she can find an ending that she might not have expected to get at the beginning of the story.

Now I'm not going to sit here and complain like I usually do, instead I'll share some funny occurrences that happened during rehearsals. First of all, did you know that it's very hard for a bunch of teenagers, who go to a British school, to speak and act in a believable, unexaggerated American accent? Because that became very apparent when the cast first received their scripts. Another one is the pet names. Love is a very apparent theme in the musical and given that the characters are young adults, there's bound to be some language that our generation would call "cringe". This, coupled with the fact that American accents are hard for some people, was the reason that the actor for Warner Huntington III physically couldn't read his lines out loud, and I, instead, had to read them out for him. I don't blame him though, I have a killer American accent.

There are ups and downs in every production that Sharples does, it's inevitable. But the most important thing is that when we do reach those downs, we bounce back higher than ever before. I'm positive that every single member of the cast is working hard to learn their lines and perfect their role. Regardless of how big or small the character might be, everyone makes an impact on the overall show. I see a lot of young, aspiring actors within the group and we're all very keen to show why we're the best of the best. We have around 6-7 months, and we're working hard to make sure that when the time comes, we'll deliver a show that's bigger than ever before. Good luck to everyone involved!

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VOL. 15, NO. 8



MOST WANTED NOW



2025/2026



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How to smash your revision without all the stress:

BY ANONYMOUS

Revision. We have all heard that word before. Whether it is from teachers, family or friends, the word can be daunting for everyone. However it doesn't have to feel like torture. With the right techniques you can turn revision from a chore to a powerful weapon for exam success. Here is some of my top tips to study smarter, not harder:

Break it down into manageable chunks

It is easy to think that we should revise everything all at once to get it done quicker, however your brain will struggle to retain the information. Instead try the Pomodoro technique - focus on a particular topic for 25-30 mins before taking a 5 minute break. By using this method you are more likely to stay motivated while still remembering key information that you would've likely forgot from "hours of revision."

The switch from active to passive revision

Sometimes just reading and highlighting notes isn't real revision. Instead find methods that work for you. This can include creating a set of flashcards or mind maps to help you remember key information. If those don't work for you try a method called blurting which is an active recall technique that requires you to write down everything you remember about a topic from memory. Then fill in the gaps in a different colour while referring back to your notes. Additionally try using past papers subject specifications since they will be an essential tool to showcase that you can apply the knowledge to a variety of different exam style questions. Not all these methods will work for you so it is essential to find one that is tried and tested.

Create a revision timetable

Spending hours on one subject can instantly make your brain switch off. Instead create a realistic revision timetable that you will be able to follow. Try to include a subject mix subjects you enjoy revising for with those that may be a bit more tricky. This can help you still feel motivated and keep your brain engaged. Don't cram multiple subjects in one day. Aim for at least 2 subjects to revise for while still allowing you time to complete homework, coursework etc. This will give you clarity on knowing what you will be revising for the day without feeling the pressure of getting everything done.

Make time for the things you enjoy

Even though exam season can put a toll on your mood it is still important to have some time for yourself. Whether it is watching an episode of your favourite show or meeting up with friends it is important to still fit time in your schedule for fun. I understand that fun can sometimes be the least of our priorities once we see all the work piling up but is it important to set goals and treat yourself when you hit them. Small rewards equal motivation increase.

Revision does not have to be scary. With the right approach you will feel more prepared for your exams and feel more confident in your abilities. Remember to start small and stay consistent - small steps add up to the bigger picture.



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Music Column

The music column is back for the new school year! I now have a couple suggestions for the article which will be included in here! If you want to show others new music go to listen to, email this email: musicolumn-ideas@outlook.com

Sabaton

Swedish metal trailblazers Sabaton are back, releasing singles for their upcoming album 'legends'. The upcoming album will include tracks about historical figures such as Jeanne d'arc, Napoleon and Julius Caesar. Listening to Sabatons' lyrics does feel like a history lesson condensed into a 3 minute track -even if it does feel slightly cliched- (with lyrics like 'hear their guns and their battle cries') , but the energy is boundless and but seemingly less angry than what is expected of heavy metal but instead a feast for the ears.



SOURCE: BANDCAMP



SOURCE: PITCHFORK

Tanukichan

Singer - songwriter 'Tanukichan' is an artist who makes a blend of dreamy indie pop and shoegaze music. She uses a lot of heavily distorted guitar and the chill-out elements of shoegaze with an upbeat rock vibe. Shoegaze, by definition is ['a sub-genre of indie rock characterised by its ethereal mixture of obscured vocals, guitar pedal effects, feedback, and overwhelming volume'] (Credit- Wikipedia). Tanukichan is a prime example of shoegaze, which is unusually atmospheric and harmonious even with the chaos of the distortion added to many of her songs. Shoegaze is often described as being likened to 'dream music' or 'space rock' with an almost hypnotising space- like sound.

New Releases

Saint Etienne:

After 3 decades of making music, electronic musicians

Saint Etienne have released a new album. International, their new album as a whole sounds infectiously dance-y, upbeat, and fun. (surprising for an album made to be a farewell to their fans as musicians) If you like fun dance music, with light lyricism you're looking at the right album! Some songs even sound quite like classic 70s disco! The album has many catchy beats and some have elements of rave. (Album released 5th September)



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Biffy Clyro:

The new album by Biffy Clyro, *Futique* is finally out! Biffy Clyro are renowned for their rock music with unique time signatures, rhythms, and captivating guitar lines. The new album is a made up word, a combination of 'future' and 'antique'. In interviews, the Biffy Clyro frontman Simon Neil states the album title represents the moments that should be looked back on in years time, with many songs representing the message of living in the now, and valuing connections with others. The band breaks from their rock conventions and expectations with the new album. (Album released 19th September)

FUTIQUE



AN ODE

SOURCE: METAL TALK

Chvrches:

Chvrches have recently released a 10th anniversary edition of their most famous album, *Every Open Eye*. Chvrches are known for their huge, bold synth sounds, and using their voice as an instrument to contribute to the song. The new album contains remixes of famous songs on the album such as *Leave A Trace*. The album also contains a version of 'Bury it', namely a collaboration between Chvrches and Hayley Williams [of Paramore] where she contributes vocals to the song. (The album was released in April).



SOURCE: PITCHFORK

End notes:

- Don't forget it's National Album day on the 18th of October!
- Any emails to musicolumn-ideas@outlook.com will be considered and I'll try to add it.

That's it for this one!

BY ELLIOT SIMPSON



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

BACK TO SCHOOL HAUL:

A DEEPER DELVE INTO THE PENCIL CASES OF STUDENTS

Welcome back readers! I'm delighted to be beginning another year of the Sharples Spotlight, but with that comes the stress of a brand new school year. I'm sure you've all been through the pressure and stress that comes with back to school shopping (especially Y7), but in this article we're going to talk through our favourite items to buy to start this school year in style!

BACKPACK

KHADIJA: This year I bought an Adidas backpack, but I didn't want it to look the same as every other student, so when I saw this unique, minimalistic flower pattern I knew this was the backpack I wanted. Unfortunately, this backpack was in the outlet and 50% off so is now unavailable.

This is not to say that there aren't plenty of other high-quality adidas backpacks.

Something, which I know always confuses me, is which size backpack I should buy. This one is 20L, and it looked quite small when it arrived but it is the perfect size to fit everything I need in. However, if you carry around a lot of revision material I'd recommend a size up. I would also recommend getting one with a padded back especially if you walk to school.



SAFIYA: Whether choosing a handbag or a backpack, opt for something wide and deep, preferably with a lining and strong seams. And try not to get something with a soft mesh on the front (Not the plasticky mesh often used in water bottle carriers on backpacks). This would make sure that your bag doesn't end up being a torn heap of fabric by the spring term (i.e. me in year 7). I prefer a backpack over a handbag, since if you're tired you can distribute the weight across both shoulders and not just one. There are plenty of good backpack brands on the market: Jansport, Nike, Adidas, Converse, Fjällräven and the list goes on. Look for thick, durable and waterproof fabrics. If you're like me and also want hundreds of pockets in your bag, you can buy backpack / handbag organisers that slot into your bag, helping keep it structured and helping you keep your things nice and organised.



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Water Bottle

KHADIJA: When it comes to water bottles I don't recommend a specific brand, but I will always believe that a reusable stainless steel/thermal water bottle is the way to go. This is because it will keep your water at a nice temperature for the whole day and it is far more environmentally friendly. I do remember having a water bottle from Primark, which was quite disappointing because the paint very quickly chipped away and stuck to my hands.

SAFIYA: I agree, but rather than making the mistake of getting a Primark one, try finding a good-quality, leak-proof and well built metal bottle; It doesn't necessarily have to be anything expensive or tiktok-viral. Get a good bottle that will last you a while - cheaper ones WILL dent super easily and, unfortunately for khadija, the paint comes off even after a short while.

PENS

KHADIJA: Perhaps the most important item, the humble pen is the most crucial to your schoolwork meaning that a good quality pen is incredibly important. Now, I'm talking more for the lefties here, because when it comes to writing our life isn't easy. I know the pain of an inky pen when you're left-handed they write so well, and feel so good and yet they smear all over your wrist and your page. I feel you, you are not alone. For the past couple of years I've used Zebra animal print pens, however although they are effective I've noticed that they run out very fast and tend to be a little bit pricier. As a result, this year I've opted for the trusty BIC cristal ballpoint pens, which do somehow still smudge but extremely minimally, so it might just be me.

SAFIYA: I can say that I definitely prefer more inky pens over ballpoint pens since I write really quickly, and ballpoint pens usually don't glide across a page as smoothly. Anyone who owns an inky pen knows the pain of smudges, and for me it really doesn't help because of the fact that the side of my hand gets covered in ink after dragging across the page. I always keep a backup of Pentonic LINC pens, but Kenji gel pens work the best for me - the ink dries really quickly, stopping me from smudging all over my page. Plus, they look nice. However, they come with their own problems; the barrel can be really fragile and can smash, the ink runs out very quickly and they are a bit uncomfortable to hold. In the end, I'm still looking for a good pen - maybe Khadija can help me out...



PENCILS

KHADIJA: As ridiculous as it probably sounds, a good quality pencil is important for smooth, dark writing and beautiful diagrams. This year to save money, I bought a pack of mechanical pencils from Home Bargains, but I can't say I'm the biggest fan. I mean they are very aesthetically pleasing, but in terms of usage I much prefer the BIC pastel mechanical pencils. They are far more expensive but I think they are well worth the price for how long they lasted.



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SAFIYA: BIC Mechanical pens are the way to go - you never have to worry about having them sharpened, which can make your average pencil tiny if done a lot, as long as you carry a few refills with you!

HIGHLIGHTERS

KHADIJA: As peculiar as it sounds I don't use actual highlighters. Instead I use Crayola Pastel Supertips. This is because they have a perfect tip for highlighting and a beautiful array of pastel colours, which makes even books for the worst subjects feel extra cheerful. I bought these on Amazon for less than £2 but their retail price is around £3.50+ and the 10 pack in particular isn't available in many stores.

SAFIYA: If you know me, you probably know that I actually have two sets of highlighters; I use these random square ones that I found on Amazon one random day, and rather than being random bright and fluorescent colours, they actually come in really nice neutral shades. The best part - I got two packs of 5 for about £4! I also have a set of dual ended Zebra Mildliners, where one side is a brush pen and the other side is a fine tip. Though they are a little pricey, I really like how versatile they are. If you are planning on buying them, I would recommend getting them from a shop in person, as I got mine for about £1 per pen in a 15-pack (so £15) but plenty of online resellers sell these for around £30!



BY SAFIYA IBRAHIM AND KHADIJA MOOSA



THE SHARPLES SPOTLIGHT

SHARPLES JOKE COLUMN

I TOLD MY GIRLFRIEND SHE DREW HER EYEBROWS TOO HIGH. SHE SEEMED SURPRISED.

WHY SHOULD YOU NEVER PLAY POKER AT THE ZOO? TOO MANY CHEETAHS

WHAT DO YOU CALL A NOSE WITH NO BODY? NO BODY NOSE

WHAT DO YOU CALL A GUY WHO'S REALLY LOUD? MIKE.

I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHY THE BALL KEPT GETTING LARGER. THEN IT HIT ME.

I JUST READ A BOOK ABOUT HELIUM. IT WAS SO GOOD THAT I CAN'T PUT IT DOWN.