

# Teaching and Learning Monthly Newsletter

SHARPLES  
SCHOOL



December 2024



## It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year...

Despite the cold, the darkness and the onset of rain that never seems to let up - we made it!

The end of term is nigh and it has been a brilliant few months to reflect on.

Personally, I feel we have really established and invested into the Reading Together form time programme. It has been wonderful to see the students reading in the morning, hearing the different roles they play and also seeing them converse and reflect on the books they are reading.

I have loved seeing the library transform over the year, there is a real sense of excitement within the library and it is lovely to see the students engaging with a range of different books.

Not only this, but we've also had a successful run with the Sharples Library wish list.

If you would like to make a final donation before the check out date, please see the link below:

I am very excited for the books to arrive and for students to have access to a wonderful array of new and engaging books.

In this first term, we have ensured Y7 have had a successful transition into high school, the clubs and enrichment activities are never ending, Y8 have continued on their success in these enrichment opportunities and are looking forward to their trip to Wales! Y9 are ready to choose Options and prepare for their assessments, and Y10 and Y11 have both had a successful start and continuation to their GCSE years.

Thank you for your continued hard work with our students.

In this newsletter you can expect:

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**Article on Motivation in the final term.**

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**Sharples Shoutouts and Celebrations!**

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**National College Recommendations**

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**CPD Book Recommendations**

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**X / Twitter Shoutouts**

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**ECT Corner**

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Of course, students' volition to study is based on their intrinsic motivation and their resilience. To encourage this, teachers can create the feeling of success in how they show results. We can manage students' expectations about what success looks like for them, it's important to avoid comparisons between students. We don't want to rank them within the class and demotivate students.

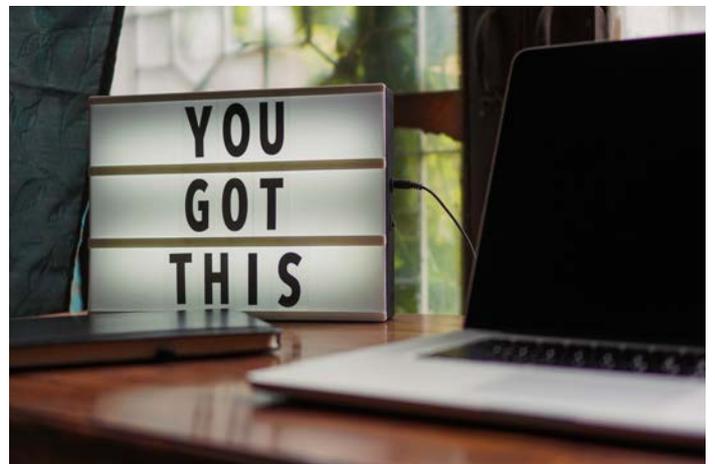
Students need to value doing well in each subject and inherently believe it is worth their time and effort. This is where the volition to study often crumbles, studying is not something easy, it is frustrating and effortful, especially when the darkness of the season has not subsided and most students are feeling tired and perhaps discouraged.

To convince students that success is worth the effort, we could increase the perceived value of success or minimise the effort required (what the students want!). This does not mean that we should alleviate the challenge from students, but actually, we should remove the barriers. In Y9, the students have gone through a successful revision workshop process, and hopefully this should have positive outcomes in the Spring term. We have shown students how to successfully revise and share

this information with parents. We want students to feel as though they are ending the term positively and will already be ahead of the trend once the Spring term starts.

This is one way of removing barriers, however, it is only a small cog in the machine that encourages students to continue studying. Teachers, tests, results, lessons and resources all contribute to this ever moving system.

Finally, students learn how to behave from others around them. During the results lessons or feedback sessions, we want all students to take an active role in their learning and the correction process. This is why routines and explicitly teaching behaviour to support learning in the classroom is vitally important. It is also important to end the year with an encouraging few words, simply telling students you are happy with their progress, you are ensuring that this progress will continue on in the new year and ensuring that when they come back, they will be welcomed back into the classroom - a safe and warm place to be.



### **Teacher Motivations and Reflections**

Whilst this time of year is a time of reflection for the students, it is also important for teachers to reflect on their time in the classroom so far. These reflections should be used as motivations for the new year.

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When I think of my own teaching, I think about both the highs and also the changes I need to make after the past 4 months. I set out this year with a motivation to ensure my use of formative assessment, MWB and active listening checks are used more frequently throughout the lesson. Just last week, in a Y11 lesson I feel like I effectively used a combination of oracy and MWB to ensure every pupil could articulate themselves eloquently and perceptively on a particular poem. This worked extremely well and ensured that students could go on to write about these ideas passionately in an extended piece of writing.

As we go forward into the new year, I want to continue on these habits, whilst also ensuring I am constantly reflecting and setting new goals for myself. In the next term, I want to ensure I use the guided reading strategies more purposefully and ensure this is used across all lessons in the school more frequently. In a Y10 lesson on A Christmas Carol, I used these strategies alongside a countdown which kept the pace up, but also ensured all students had mastered the knowledge of a Victorian slum. This is something I want to continue to work on this year and as we all know, our work on Teaching and Learning is never complete!

**MINDSET**  
**IS**  
**EVERYTHING**

A few tips when considering how to reflect on the year:

Reflect on what really worked - a lesson, an idea or a moment? Perhaps go through lessons and write a bullet point list so that when the time comes for planning in the new year, you have a place to start.

Do a reset or revamp of your room! It's that time of year when there is a shortage of whiteboard pens and whiteboards are stained with the ink of lessons gone by, So, whilst you have some free time this week, it might be an idea to restock and ensure when you come back in the Spring term, your classroom is once again a welcoming place!

Set yourself a goal! Reflect on the achievements of the year so far and set yourself a target to meet when you come back in January.

And finally, enjoy the break! Take a rest, reset yourself! Enjoy the time with your family and friends, enjoy all the Christmas movies, watch Home Alone on repeat and enjoy the lie ins!

Come back motivated and ready for another term of relentless, determined, passionate work on improving the outcomes for all students.

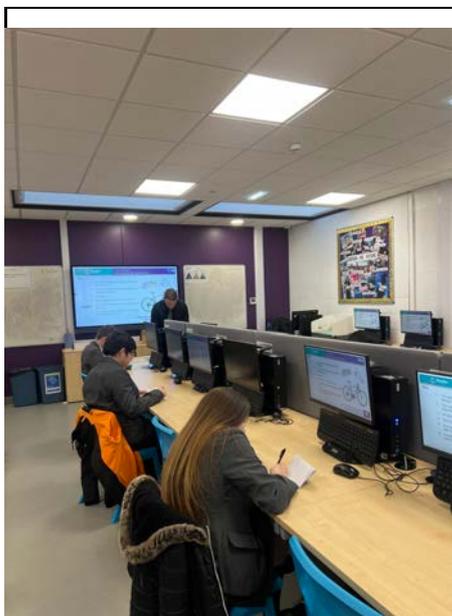
***Remember, every day, every lesson, every student!***



# SHARPLES CELEBRATES!



Each month we want to shout out teachers who want to share excellent practice! The first 3 teachers to email [n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk) with an example of brilliant practice will receive a box of celebrations delivered to their classroom!



## Phil Myerscough

Phil is extremely good with pace in the classroom, his silent starter activities ensure all pupils are on task and are accessing formative assessment quickly. Phil questions deliberately and targets pupils brilliantly. He also ensures that all pupils correct their work and checks their knowledge repeatedly to ensure mastery of the subject.



## Iqrah Hassan

Iqrah encourages motivation and uses praise brilliantly in the classroom. She nominates individuals for the grouped tables and they each have to answer a question focusing on the knowledge of the lesson. Students can gain excellence points depending on their answers which ensures all students want to achieve!



## Amanda O'Donohoe

Amanda has been nominated by the external advisor, Vincent Ashworth.

He felt her care for the students in the classroom, the work she was doing with lower ability pupils and the standard of work in the room was exceptional.

Well done Amanda!



## Mini Masterclass: A 10-Minute Guide to Motivation

This webinar explores motivation: what it means, where it comes from, and how an understanding of the theory can inform classroom practice.

 nationalcollege.com

[CLICK HERE](#) 

### Reviews

*'The video helped me to understand the issues surrounding motivation. It's also provided me with some information with which to further my research and cpd.'*



## Benefits of Self-reflective Learning (Secondary)

This webinar provides secondary schools with guidance on encouraging children to be self-reflective learners, enabling them to take ownership of their learning.

 nationalcollege.com

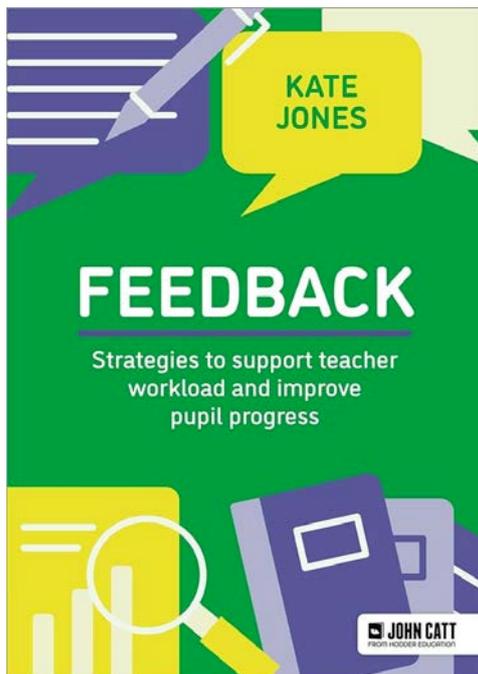
[CLICK HERE](#) 

### Reviews

*'Great content with clear and practical support which will best support both myself and my learners, in self-reflecting on our practices.'*

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## Book and Twitter (X) Recommendations



### **Feedback by Kate Jones**

This CPD book has only just hit the shelves and focuses on practical feedback ideas and options. Kate Jones is a very well known writer on lots of elements of teaching and learning including retrieval.

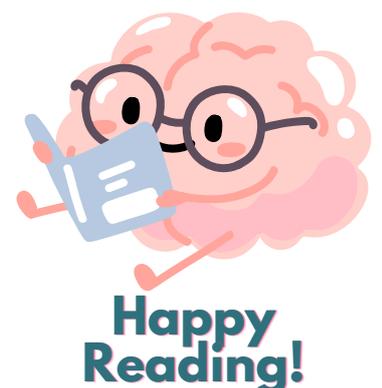
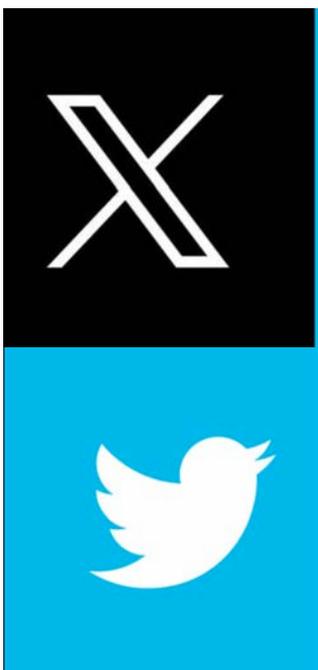
Please email [n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk](mailto:n.ayub@sharplesschool.co.uk) if you would like to borrow!

### **CPD Ideas**

[A useful thread detailing some of the CPD opportunities another school has considered this term.](#)

[Click here to view the thread](#)

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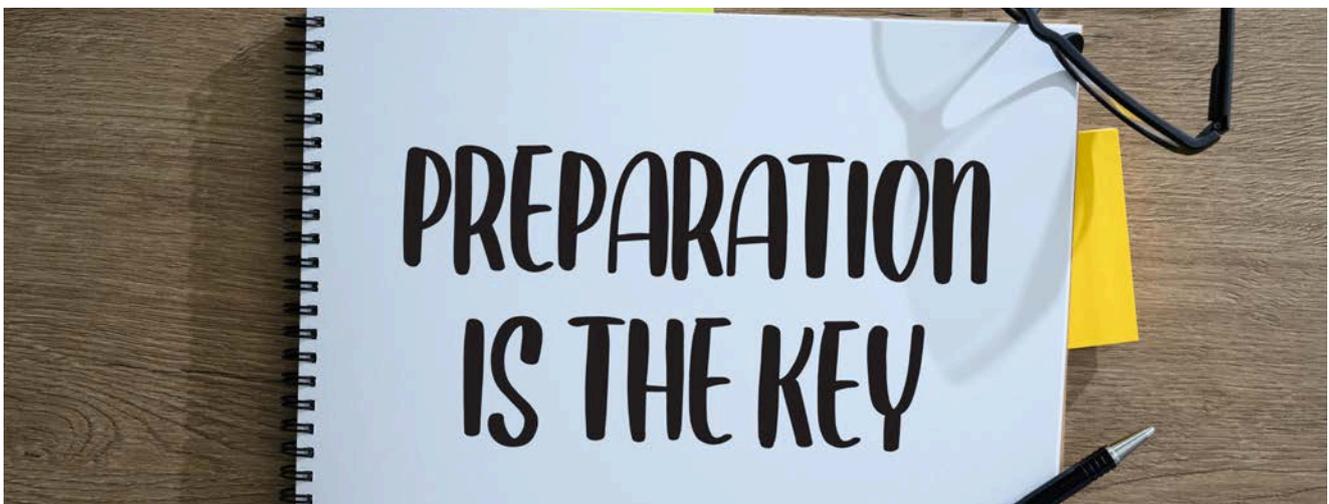
**University of Sunderland - What to expect on your teaching placement**



Teaching placements are an integral part of your initial teacher training. Gaining that valuable, first-hand teaching experience in schools is crucial to your degree and for preparing you for future employment in that it will enable you to build on your skills and put them into practice in a classroom environment.

There are several things we would recommend you do when preparing for your teaching placement. If possible, it's worth completing a practice journey to and from your school so that you're familiar with the route before your first day. We would also advise you to visit the school's website to familiarise yourself with their routine and undertake some initial research, but it's a good idea to make contact directly to introduce yourself and ask any questions you may have before you start. Try to find out the names of key staff, information around safeguarding procedures, and if possible, ask for copies of relevant documents such as the code of conduct, school handbook, and health and safety guidelines.

It's also useful to get more information about the pupils you'll be teaching, for example, the age range, what's currently being taught, and whether there are any individual needs or adjustments which need to be made and taken into consideration, for example, pupils with SEND.





**Don't be afraid to ask for help**

With so many teachers rushed off their feet, it can feel awkward reaching out to staff for help. But remember the point of your placement isn't to be a fully-trained teacher from day one but to learn from others. You won't be expected to know it all and asking colleagues to check over your lesson plans or observe their lessons shows you're keen to learn.

**Accept disasters are part of the placement!**

Sometimes you can plan an amazing lesson on paper but things just won't go your way. Whether a fight kicked off the period before and your class won't settle or you've over or underestimated your students' abilities, don't take it personally and let it go. It happens.

**...but do keep adapting**

On the other hand, if you do figure out early into the lesson that things aren't working out, don't be afraid to ditch the lesson plan and try something different. Your observer will be impressed you can adapt to the needs of your class and haven't kept flogging a dead horse.

**The staffroom is your best friend**

Don't contemplate eating lunch at your desk (or worse, skipping it altogether!). The staffroom is the place where friendships are formed and much-needed intel is gained. Not only will you gain much needed downtime but you can often pick up invaluable tips and compare notes on classes.

**For more tips here, [Click here!](#)**