

Teaching and Learning Monthly Newsletter

ISSUE #10

SHARPLES
SCHOOL



June 2026



Summer Adrenaline!

Welcome to the June edition of the newsletter!

The Y11 exam desks can't be packed away too quickly. The jump from Y10-Y11 is getting quicker each year as the Y10 mocks are well underway and this is a testament to the way we work at Sharples!

The newsletter this month talks all about enrichment, opportunities and creating a safe, welcoming environment for all pupils. I hope you take the time to read this and reflect on all we do in this final term!

Enrichment is definitely something we pride ourselves upon and whilst writing this newsletter it has been great to reflect on all the opportunities we give to our pupils.

It is undeniable that June requires a different kind of dedication from us all, but it provides a brilliant opportunity to showcase the strength of our school community.

The 'Sharples Experience' is definitely a unique selling point of our school, being the most popular school in Bolton isn't an easy feat, but it's a result of the hard work of all the staff.

Enjoy the newsletter, and make the final weeks of the year count!

Happy reading!

In this newsletter you can expect:

**Article on
Enrichment
Benchmarks**

**Sharples
Shoutouts and
Celebrations!**

**Sharples Staff
Section**

**CPD Book
Recommendations**

**X / Twitter
Shoutouts**



Enrichment Benchmarks

Every year, we all fall into the same trap. Once Y11 finally leave the Astroturf after their final goodbyes and shirt signing, sighs can be heard from every classroom as the relentless nature of Y11 comes to a close. It feels like a break is finally going to arrive, when we unfortunately come to realise that the summer term is one of the busiest of the year!

Trips, activities, celebrations, warmer days and outdoor learning - it all happens in this last term and it needs to be something we celebrate! It should be no surprise to hear that the government has finally started to update schools on the new Enrichment Benchmarks that are going to hold schools to account for the work they do in wider school life.

At Sharples, learning never stops at the classroom and students are always being offered opportunities that show them the world beyond school. If we partner what we do in the classroom, with strong cultural capital links, we are supporting our students to go and look beyond Bolton and achieve something great.



Not an Add On

It is easy to fall into the old-school mindset of viewing extra-curricular activities, clubs, and trips as mere "add-ons", luxuries or rewards reserved for the final weeks of the academic year.

At Sharples, we see it differently. Enrichment is a core pillar of the Sharples identity and we use enrichment opportunities to not only develop relationships, but to also widen the horizons of our students to enhance their long term goals. One of the highlights of my week last week was seeing pupils arrive back to school after the Physics Olympics and beaming with pride as they announced that they had placed in both 1st and 2nd place! At the same time, we have students competing regularly in Athletics, in Rounders Tournaments and representing the school in all different ways. It is something that we pride ourselves at Sharples, but it is a school wide responsibility, not the responsibility of a few members of staff.

It's important to acknowledge the impact that these enrichment opportunities will have on pupils. While a student might eventually forget the exact layout of a worksheet they completed in Year 8 (despite the content being a life skill), they will never forget the feeling of standing on a theatre stage, visiting a university for the first time, or coding their first robot in a lunch time club.

These experiences build character, broaden horizons, and foster a deep sense of pride into Sharples. The new benchmarks are not a checklist for staff to tick off; they are a collective promise we make to our community that every child will receive a well-rounded, world-class education, not only in the classroom, but beyond!

Enrichment Benchmarks

Equity

The work that we have done around enrichment has been fantastic, Sophie Curzon particularly has been a driver over the past few years to take every single opportunity for our pupils. I have been witness to her Evolve account, and I can say the list is absolutely endless. She never says no to a member of staff and will go out of her way to ensure ALL students have gone on a trip at some point during their time at Sharples. Her work on AE has been fantastic and with the new benchmarks asking for us to track engagement, we are once again, ahead of the curve. When other schools are asking, which pupils have been on a trip and which haven't whilst trying to sort through endless lists, we already have access to the data to plan ahead.

Despite the fantastic data we have, it's important as staff members that we use this when planning. In the last edition of the newsletter, attendance was the focus and it was established that the best adaptive teaching only works if the students are in their seats. The exact same principle applies to enrichment. If our trips and clubs are only attended by the most confident, affluent, or outgoing students, we aren't ensuring equity across all students. True inclusion means ensuring the extra-curricular space is welcoming for all. At Sharples, this is absolutely true, there are no pupils who don't feel represented within our school. I know first hand that Anime Club is put on for students and this is quite a niche area that not many staff have the chance to engage with, but the staff that run this are creating a safe, welcoming space for our pupils.

Y7					
Number of Clubs/Fixtures	All	PP	FSM	EAL	SEN
1	95%	91%	91%	90%	95%
5+	80%	71%	71%	66%	70%
10+	67%	58%	57%	55%	60%
Y8					
Number of Clubs/Fixtures	All	PP	FSM	EAL	SEN
1	68%	67%	69%	68%	81%
2	59%	53%	54%	53%	75%
3	56%	49%	51%	53%	72%
Y9					
Number of Clubs/Fixtures	All	PP	FSM	EAL	SEN
1	73%	81%	80%	70%	71%
2	67%	74%	73%	61%	68%
3	55%	60%	60%	46%	64%

Enrichment Benchmarks

Georgia Kirk regularly runs a Pokemon club for a student who struggled significantly at the start of the year, but by creating and fostering a sense of belonging for our pupils, they can make developments in their own confidence, as well as thriving in the classroom.

For our most vulnerable pupils, or those who have spent the year battling anxiety and school avoidance, an enrichment activity shouldn't be a reward they have to earn after proving themselves, it can be the very catalyst that anchors them to school life. A specific club or a creative project can be the exact hook that transforms a persistently absent pupil into an engaged, enthusiastic member of our community and we have seen some great evidence of that this year.

Scouting for Talent

Often, the barrier to a student joining an extra-curricular activity isn't a lack of desire; it is a fear of the unknown. Vulnerable students frequently miss out simply because they don't know who else will be there, worry about after school provision, they might have to pick up a sibling from another school or even lack the confidence to walk into a room full of peers alone.

This is where our staff come in as the ultimate difference-makers, advocates and champions. During Twilight, Nasen was referenced as a starting point when looking at the Inclusive Teacher Handbook. This handbook champions teachers as the people who can make a real difference to a students' life. We know how important it is to push and provide our students with opportunities and we need to take that responsibility seriously. Whilst developing our relationships with pupils in the classroom, we can almost act as a talent scout for our pupils and discover more about them!

In this last term, could you as a department run a summer challenge? Could you set up a challenge for over the summer and engage some of the pupils that thrive in your subject? Can we make it inclusive and engaging for the pupils that might not be looking forward to 7 weeks off?

Don't just put a slide up on the board and wait for sign-ups. Explicitly tap a quiet or vulnerable student on the shoulder and tell them how brilliant they would be at doing something like this, tell them you're looking forward to their entry!

Use the strong relationships you've built all year to bridge the gap. Speak to students who might not be as confident and dispel any fears they may have, make sure all instructions are explicit so the fear of the unknown melts away.

Thank you for constantly looking to provide our students with opportunities everyday that go beyond our role as classroom teachers. You are the reason that some of these pupils' lives will change, new experiences curiosity will enhance their understanding of the world and I hope you realise how important you are in their lives!



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 with an example of brilliant practice will receive a box of celebrations delivered to their classroom!



Sophie Curzon

Sophie has worked relentlessly this year. Whether it is to do with transition events, going to Spain, supporting students with PE and tournaments or setting up Sharpchella! The enrichment and the cultural capital that she has injected into Sharples has been incredible! She consistently has high expectations of the pupils in her care but has a perfect balance of firm, yet fair.



Georgia Kirk

Georgia has worked extremely hard this year to ensure reading ages and interventions are meaningful and purposeful for students. The data has consistently been positive and she has worked hard to ensure the ages are accurate for staff to use. She has created a welcoming environment for pupils to see the benefit of improving their reading and ensuring Oracy is a priority for pupils in order to propel them forward in their future endeavours.



Hollie Elias

Hollie has almost completed her first year at Sharples and she has blended in seamlessly with the school, its ethos and its drive for excellence. She is relentless in her pursuit of becoming a better teacher everyday. She has made great relationships with students and staff and is always keen to expand her subject knowledge. She is consistent and uses the routines to ensure all pupils are engaged.

Sharples Staff Section

In this part of the newsletter, we want to discover more about the staff at Sharples and the incredible work they do on a daily basis.

Each month, one member of staff will feature and we will discover more about their background and how they ended up at Sharples.

This month, Jade Roberts has kindly detailed more about her experience during her time at Sharples.



1. How long have you been working at Sharples?

I started working at Sharples in September 2024.

2. Why did you decide to work in the education sector?

Growing up, I always wanted to be a teacher. My brother is 7 years younger than me and I loved looking after him and teaching him everything I was learning at school. I also used to play "teachers" with my grandad when I was young. I pride myself on being supportive, understanding and empathetic and I have always wanted to make a difference to young people's lives.

3. What career path did you take that led you to Sharples?

When I was in Year 10 at Sharples (yes, I was a student here), I completed work experience at Brownlow Fold Primary School in Halliwell. I loved it so much that when I left college, I got an apprenticeship there as a Teaching Assistant. I completed Level 2 and Level 3 Teaching Assistant qualifications before going on to study at university two evenings per week and achieving a First Class Ba Honors Degree in Primary Education. I worked as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant for many years teaching pupils from Reception-Year 6. When I saw the job advert for the Year Coordinator job at Sharples, I knew it was time to push myself out of my comfort zone and try something new. I'm glad I took the leap of faith because I love being part of the Sharples family.

4. What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is definitely seeing the smiles on students' faces every day and knowing I am playing a small part in their journey. There is no better feeling than making a difference to students and their families. Surroundings and build independence and travel in public spaces.

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5. What is the most interesting part of your job?

The most interesting part of my job is how different each day is. You will never be bored as a Year Coordinator as there's so much to fit into one day! From safeguarding duties, to pastoral care, to leading important meetings and attending meetings with external agencies such as the police, health professionals, children's services and more, there's never a dull day.

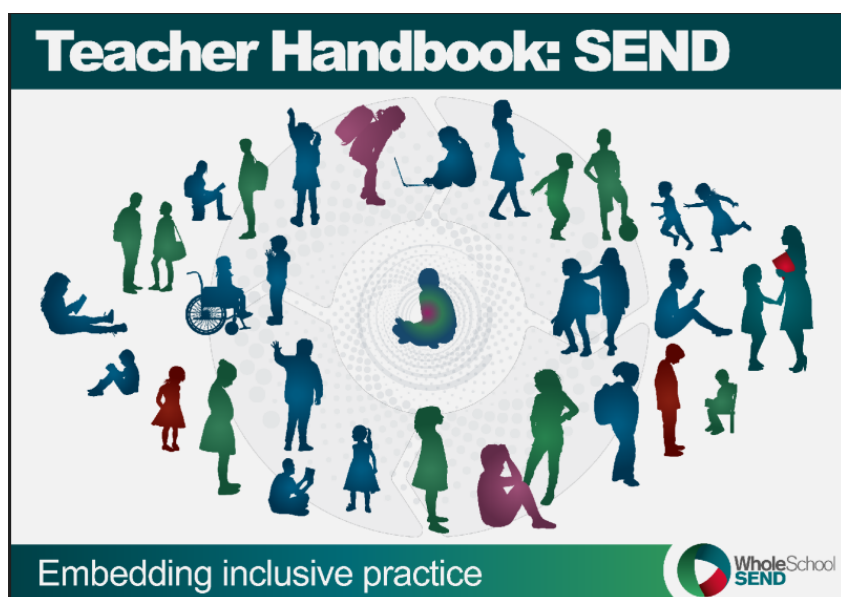
6. What do you wish the teaching staff knew about your job?

I wish the teaching staff knew how many plates the pastoral team are spinning, and how many hats we have to wear each day.

7. How can teachers and the school, as a whole, work to be more supportive of the pastoral team?

Teaching staff and pastoral staff need to work collaboratively to get the best from students and to ensure all students receive the correct support in school. It is important for any concerns or issues to be communicated clearly, in person or on the safeguarding or behaviour logs to ensure the most effective next steps can be taken. Additionally, I believe school pastoral teams need funded, external psychological supervision as carrying the emotional weight of hundreds of families takes its toll.

Book and Twitter (X) Recommendations

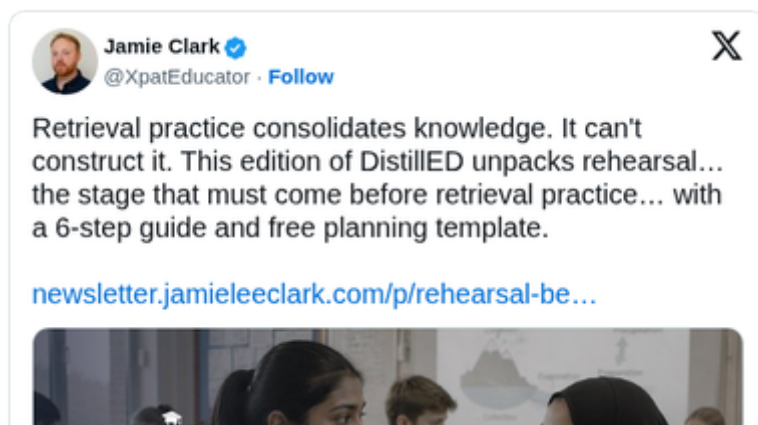
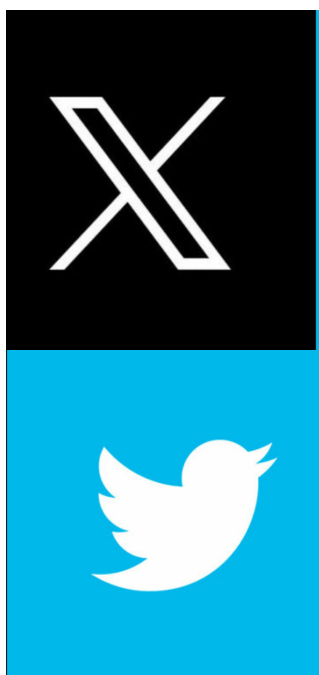


Nasen Handbook

I would highly recommend taking a look at this Inclusive Teacher Handbook. Not only does it go into great depth about how Inclusive Classroom Practice looks, but it also has a section for each subject lead with practical strategies for staff.

It is a free document online and can be accessed here:

<https://asset.nasen.org.uk/Teacher%20SEND%20handbook%2030th%20January%202024.pdf>



<https://x.com/xpateducator/status/2071527095705251856?s=46&t=FKJE4qMjKGpckKbVUqG1Pg>

Happy Reading!

