

Teaching and Learning Monthly Newsletter

ISSUE #11

SHARPLES
SCHOOL



July 2026



Summer Adrenaline!

Welcome to the final edition of the newsletter for the academic year!

We have officially made it to the finish line. Looking back at our journey since January, it is great to see how far we have come. From establishing our core morning routines to driving up attendance through the 1% Challenge and the huge amount of enrichment we have been completing this year, it has been a pleasure to write these newsletters each month! The "Sharples Standard" is alive and well, and it belongs entirely to the incredible staff reading this newsletter.

As you read through this final edition, you'll find a reflection on the incredible culture we've built this year, alongside a push to our future ambitions.

September will bring an exciting, sharpened focus back to the absolute heart of our practice: High-Quality Teaching and Learning.

We need to continue to create the perfect, stable environment for our pupils; and next year, we supercharge the academic challenge within it.

For now, though, the work is done. Please use this summer to completely disconnect, rest, and recharge your batteries!

Enjoy the final newsletter, and have a fantastic summer break!

In this newsletter you can expect:

Article on Celebrations and Reflections

Sharples Shoutouts and Celebrations!

Sharples Staff Section

CPD Book Recommendations

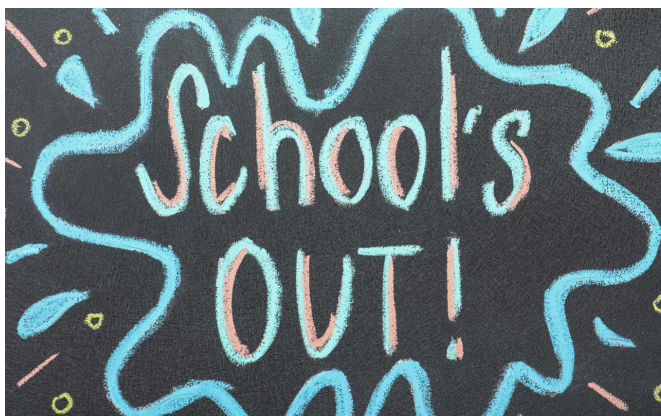
X / Twitter Shoutouts



Celebrations and Reflections!

There is no feeling quite like the final day of the academic year. As the last bells ring, the classrooms are packed away, the stack of mini whiteboards have been collected for distribution in September and the summer holidays officially begin! It is, therefore, natural to feel a profound sense of relief. But before we turn off our email notifications and lock away the mark schemes for a well-deserved summer break, I believe it's important for us to take a moment to look back at what we have achieved together.

The Sharples family extends to beyond the students, it includes the staff and we should take the chance to think about all that we have achieved together and what we can go on to achieve in September.



School culture is a notoriously difficult thing to shift. It doesn't change because of massive, sweeping gestures; it changes because of the consistent, daily, "invisible" work. It changes because of the 8:40 AM line-ups in the wind and rain and the dedication to ensure these line-ups are strict, rigid and consistent in approach. It changes because of the relentless insistence on high-quality teaching, the attendance trackers that are updated regularly and the focus on ensuring every pupil feels valued and welcomed into all classrooms.

When we walk into a classroom at Sharples, the calm, predictable, and inclusive environment is what we can see, but this didn't happen by accident. It was built piece by piece because of the foundations that have been set up through all of us. One key example is the Champions meetings. These meetings have helped shape how we go forward and how we ensure Sharples is the best place for our students. With our attendance drive and our ambition to create a safe, inclusive environment through routines, we unlocked better attendance, better relationships, better teaching and happier students. The culture that we create is our responsibility. To go back to January training day, I want to remind us that we are all the architects of our own classrooms, we are responsible for the culture of our school and we must hold ourselves accountable for this.

Moving Forward with High-Quality Teaching and Learning

A stable environment is the launchpad for exceptional academic success, and as we look ahead to September, we need to ensure our routines and expectations are consistent across all year groups. With Y7, there will be a particular focus and a rigorous approach to ensure they are adapting to the Sharples culture and we can then go forward and ensure that our teaching and our classrooms are safe spaces where learning is constantly taking place.

Enrichment Benchmarks

In September, there will be a focus on ensuring every single lesson is deemed important, classrooms should be pacy and staff should be determined to ensure students are working hard, are focusing well and their attention isn't being divided elsewhere.

We will have a re-focus on our classroom entry routines, silent starters, and teaching and learning routines to ensure we are in the perfect position to push the boundaries of cognitive engagement. In the new academic year, we want to ensure our students are being challenged, that our high expectations are being met, yet also our inclusive approach is ensuring all students can achieve. All students should walk out of a lesson knowing more and being able to do more.



Change is a constant sign of a school that refuses to stand still. People always say that the role of Teaching and Learning lead is relentless, and it is! But being a teacher and demanding the best of your pupils is just as relentless, we want to lighten the load for everyone so that it becomes a little bit easier, not only for the staff, but the pupils as well.

The Ultimate Mandate: True Rest

None of the exciting plans for September matter without a refreshed, energized team to lead them. We all deserve a well earned break with the summer sun. At times it felt like the sunshine was never going to come out, but it's here - ready for us to enjoy!

I hope you rest, recover, rejuvenate yourselves and enjoy the summer whether you are away or not. Have some ice cream, a few BBQs, enjoy the break and come back energised and ready for another relentless year of teaching and learning.

Thank you for your dedication, your consistency, and your passion this year. Have a safe, wonderful, and relaxing summer!

SHARPLES CELEBRATES!

Please see below a list of all nominations this year. Well done and thank you!

June:

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.

May:

Fazaila Haseeb - Fazaila has become an absolutely wonderful member of staff since she started at Sharples. From running the breakfast club in the morning with fellow TAs, to attending multiple trips within the school year, and just being a positive member of staff, there is nothing that Fazaila would say no to. She has become a great asset to the Sharples family!

Claire Brook - Claire has worked extremely hard this year to ensure the Creative Arts department has gone from strength to strength. The Legally Blonde performance was fantastic and she also designed a brilliant board game for the year 7s where they were able to revise their knowledge of music notation whilst also competing against each other! Claire is a great addition to the team and wonderful member of staff.

Christine Smith - Christine's unique and ambitious classroom technique has been wonderful for pupils that struggle with English and sometime have low ambitions for themselves. Christine has been relentless in her approach, has tried different avenues to support and has run multiple interventions to give her students the best chance she can.

SHARPLES CELEBRATES!

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April:

Angela Goulden - I would love to nominate Angela Goulden for her dedication to creating student friendly displays that actively support learning within her intervention classes. Angela consistently goes the extra mile to ensure her students feel supported and empowered, creating a positive environment for learning. She also creates quizzes for the end of extra course to recap all learning but also to reward students for their hard work.

Jessica Openshaw - Miss Openshaw is proving to be a wonderful Teaching Assistant who is the epitome of patience and inclusion. She is generous with her time in that she gets to know the students well, builds up a rapport with them, and offers advice in a way that is bespoke to them. She works with a multitude of students but has a knack for zooming in on pupils who need the extra help at the right time. She is particularly effective with working with SEND students who might need some gentle encouragement, some help with scribing, or just rephrasing a question in a way that they understand better

Sophie Shawcross - Sophie's delivery is characterised by sharp, concise instructions and effective pacing, using strategic countdowns to maintain high lesson momentum. Her expert use of Mini Whiteboards allows for a "live" interrogation of student understanding, where she identifies and corrects misconceptions before they become embedded.

March:

Hana Dedat - Hana sets high expectations for all students despite their starting points. She makes the learning purposeful, clear and accessible by chunking it up. She uses engaging resources to help the students enjoy the learning. She strikes a balance between being exceptionally professional but approachable and even has a texted joke that she weaves into the Friday lesson that the students all groan at but also look forward to! She brings the best out of the students and has a knack of knowing what they need and what will work for them.

Amie Heaton - Amie Heaton has made a mini examiners report for her students after a recent exam, based upon the students' misconceptions. Then she has added a task for students to complete, where they act upon the feedback. It's a new way of whole class feedback, which meets the evidence based research out there!

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March:

Claire Finney - I'd like to nominate Claire Finney for her use of 'hooks' in lessons with low ability pupils. Observing her was excellent CPD for me as I could see how she keeps pupils engaged and also makes the content relatable to them. This ensures they do not fall behind their peers.

February:

Iqrah Hassan - Iqrah creates a wonderful environment in her classroom, particularly for her Y7 pupils as she encourages them to be ambitious, work hard and is relentless in her questioning. She uses the Sharples Routines brilliantly and encourages 100% participation. The students feel very welcome in her classroom and are always attempting to impress her.

Nicola McCawley - Nicola uses clearly established routines, she models effectively and students work brilliantly during her talk tasks with shoulder partner pairs. These pairs are clearly planned effectively to ensure maximum engagement from the students. Nicola always creates a warm and welcoming environment.

Nicole Topham - Nicole is a relentless member of staff, she tries her best to take every opportunity for the students and is raising the flag for EAL / INA students brilliantly. She has worked with some very tough groups, but with the routines and her positivity, they are making great progress. In addition, her contribution to World Book Day has been a massive help.

January:

Stuart Ryder - Stuart consistently has clear established routines such as MWB usage. Students are always engaged with the talk tasks and he monitors the classroom well whilst using effective questioning and cold calling to check for understanding. Students are always keen to participate in his lessons!

Rebecca Quigley - Rebecca always welcomes pupils to her classroom with a smile. She always encourages them to try their best during lessons and she provides an environment where pupils feel that they are allowed to make mistakes. She includes effective questioning to check for understanding and gives out reward points and stickers to encourage and reward pupils' participation. Rebecca also hosts Polyglot club every Monday.

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January:

Collette Grimshaw - She has embraced the new whole school routines to the full, together with the geography specific ones. As always her classes model these behaviours and are responding positively to sanctions given last week, to show these routines are now embedded into her lessons and lots of positive behaviour points are added daily, to praise successes in the classroom.

December:

Mags Heaton - Mags provided outstanding support while I was away sick, taking over my classes and ensuring the students received consistent, high-quality instruction. Her efforts kept them firmly on track with the curriculum, demonstrating remarkable dedication and professionalism. The pupils were highly engaged and thoroughly enjoyed the creative teaching methods and educational games Mags incorporated into her lessons.

Rachel Helm - Rachel creates a great collaborative atmosphere with all students working well, supporting one another in their pairs, actively engaged in the talk task. Rachel included lots of effective questioning to check for understanding and probing questions to stretch and challenge.

Rob Poole - Rob Poole has been nominated this month for bringing lessons to life by bringing in a variety of outside guests and speakers. This offers many opportunities for students to interact with individuals from all different walks of life and to understand the way a society functions.

November:

Pat Foster - He has done some exceptional work on the use of AI to mark exam questions and produce model answers. He has fed it prompts so that it marks exactly to AQA specification.

Christine Smith - Christine Smith actively teaches assonance by repeating the individual sounds a poem makes. I often hear her 'cawing' like a hawk to get students to think about the oracy of the poem and the writer's intentions

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November:

Owain Jenkins -I observed Mr. Jenkins teaching a lesson on the James Bulger case, which can be both sensitive to discuss and distressing to hear for students. His exposition was excellent and he spent about 15-20 minutes describing the details respectfully but with great impact. You could hear a pin drop as he explained how rare a case of this nature was, how it shocked the country, and the difficulties people might face when finding motivations for a crime so harrowing. He used dramatic pause, images on screen, and even google maps to highlight missed opportunities and to situate pupils in the reality of the case. I've been taught about this case both at school and in university and I have to say this is the best exposition I've seen on the subject.

October:

Abdul Awal - Abdul always creates a positive and nurturing environment for his classes. He adapts his lessons brilliantly for his Y7s and is always around to make others smile.

Sabrina Bhaloda - Sabrina has really got stuck into life at Sharples, even before she officially got the job last year! With her fantastic French, crazy crepe machine and general enthusiasm for life, there is never a dull moment with Sabrina. She brings continuous positivity and light into the classroom for her pupils.

Ramona Mitrea - I would like to nominate Ramona Mitrea for her outstanding work and dedication with the Year 11 Spanish GCSE students. Ramona has gone above and beyond to ensure the class is thoroughly prepared for their examinations, always using innovative methods and personalized extra support on Tuesdays at lunch time for the pupils who are struggling, providing a positive and effective learning environment, significantly boosting student confidence and engagement. The implementation of the supplementary Tuesday lunch lesson has proven to be an invaluable resource, offering crucial extra practice and targeted revision time.

SHARPLES CELEBRATES!

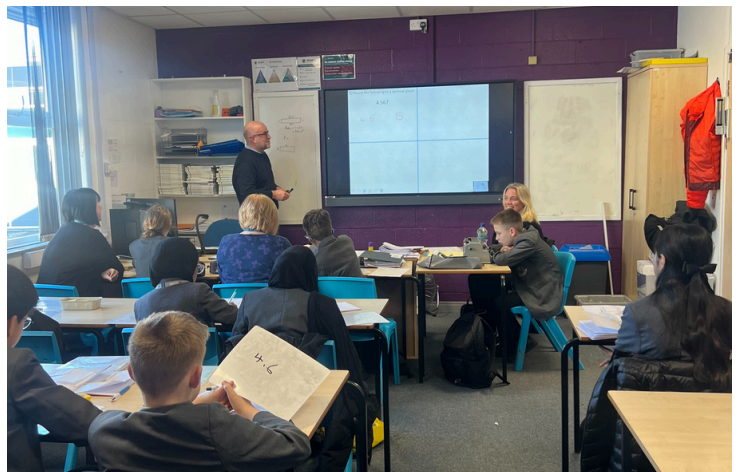
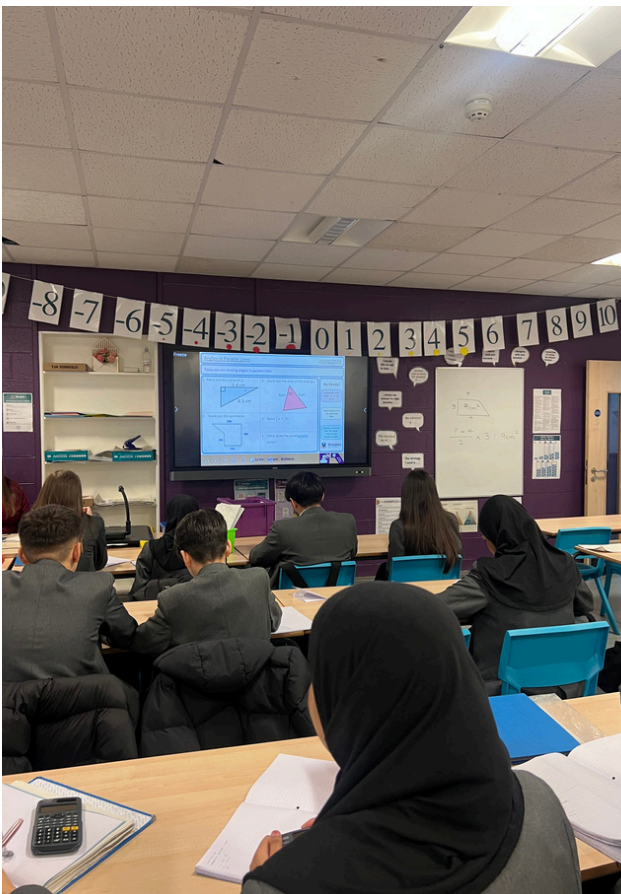
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September:

Danielle Stephenson - Danielle has been nominated for her tenacity and conscientious attitude. She has worked so hard to develop excellent relationships with her students (and colleagues), completed all of the (many) tasks set to deadline and is an outstanding ECT. Dan is a real asset to the science department and we are so lucky to have her!

Claire Finney - Claire has been nominated for her excellent work improving loyalty in Geography with a Geography club passport and in-class rewards tracker. She is an asset to the team and has been a great support to all members of the department.

Joanne Bennett - Joanne has been nominated for innovative knowledge recall silent starters in Computing and the carefully sequenced learning journey that supports them. These routines are strengthening retrieval practice and continuity across topics, while also making explicit links to cultural capital in Computer Science. As a result, students are starting to grow in confidence when connecting their prior knowledge to new learning.



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, Georgia Kirk 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 2021. I was an ECT 2 at the time.

2. Why did you want to go into teaching?

I always knew I wanted a rewarding job because I enjoy helping others. Lots of my family members were teachers so I think they secretly inspired me too. I also find it interesting that many of my friends, who I have known since primary school, have also gone on to become teachers. I initially wanted to be a primary school teacher but I quickly realised my sarcasm would probably be lost on younger children!

I was at the start of what I had planned to be a gap year when I decided to apply for teacher training for the following academic year. However, when I went for my Schools Direct interview, I walked away not only with a place on the course but also with a job as a teaching assistant starting the following month. I am still waiting to have that year of travelling!

3. Where did you study and was there a module / topic that you were really passionate about during your time at university?

I studied Journalism and English at the University of Salford. My favourite module was Children's Literature and I was even given the opportunity to have my work published, which I now regret not taking up! At the time, I was more interested in the journalism side of my degree and went on to gain experience in PR instead. I loved attending new restaurant and bar openings, which felt way more exciting than publishing a children's book at the time! However, I eventually realised it did not challenge me enough mentally and decided to go down the English route instead.

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4. What is the best part of your job?

I enjoy making small differences every day. Our students face so many different challenges and I really value the small conversations I get to have with them about their day. Those moments often have the biggest impact. I also love that 'light bulb' moment when everything finally clicks. I love seeing pupils grow in confidence.

5. What are you most passionate about in terms of teaching and learning?

Reading has always been something I have been passionate about, ever since I started my journey as a teaching assistant. I enjoy helping students develop confidence in reading and discover books they genuinely enjoy. As someone who also received reading intervention as a child to improve my fluency and confidence, I find it especially rewarding to support students in the same way that others once supported me.

6. What are the non-negotiables in your classroom?

Starting an answer with 'So basically, yeah...' when speaking in presentational talk! Peer-to-peer discussion is absolutely fine but when students are presenting their ideas to the class, I encourage them to speak clearly, confidently and with purpose.

7. If you could share one element of best practice with the rest of the staff, what would it be?

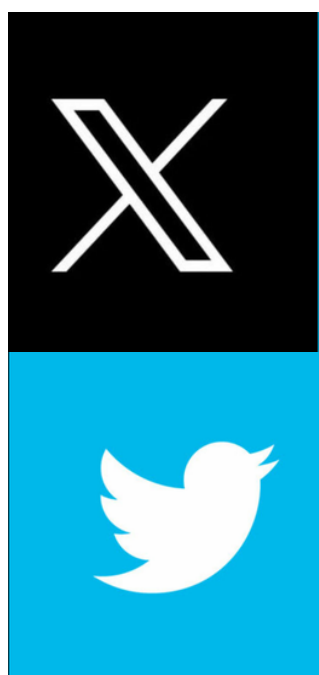
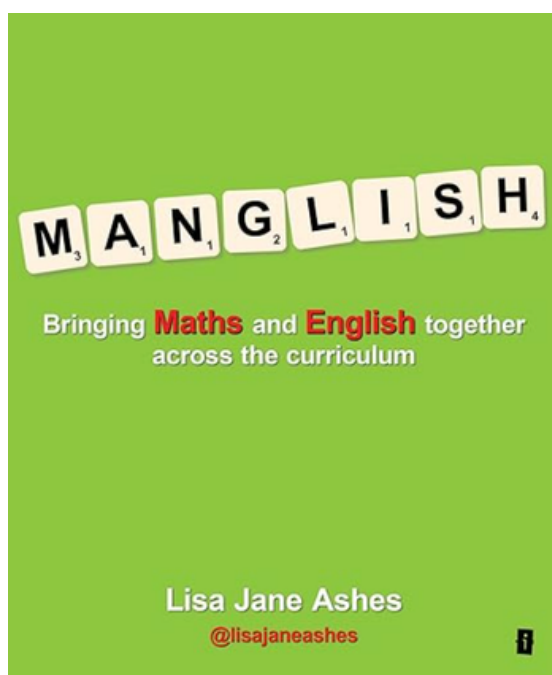
Provide more opportunities for reading and classroom talk. Don't be afraid of a noisy classroom. A classroom full of purposeful discussion is often a sign of engaged learning, not poor behaviour.

Book and Twitter (X) Recommendations



Manglish

Manglish: Bringing Maths and English Together Across the Curriculum`. The book shows how maths and English departments can develop creative, cross-curricular approaches to improving literacy and numeracy across the whole school and provides practical ideas and strategies to improve both.



This link will take you to a great guide on improving inclusion within the classroom!

Happy Reading!

