

March 2023

## Student Skills

In school, as part of our Community Skills learning, students had previously benefited from joining the local library in Ringwood where they had opportunities to work with the librarians and use technology to look up books linked with our Main Lesson and with their own interests. The Covid-19 restrictions meant this had to pause but, in Briery, with some creative thinking, we were able to turn a small room into our very own library, with age-appropriate books and up-cycled book shelves.

Here, students had a chance to be our very own Briery librarians. They became increasingly confident and were able to practise librarian target-skills, from placing the books into alphabetical order or according to a category such as fiction, non-fiction, Main Lesson, specific interests (birds, Disney characters, cats and dogs, bagpipes, music and minions etc) or by collection: Tom Gates, Roald Dahl, David Walliams, cooking, Arts and Crafts.

From this experience, one of our students subsequently shared with our Careers Adviser that one of her favourite jobs would be to work with books. A volunteering opportunity presented itself at her local library in Fordingbridge and a CV containing relevant work experience onsite and offsite, outstanding presentation during the job interview, her positive approach to the demands of the job and her inquisitive personality driven towards new learning opportunities are the visible ingredients of her success story.

She is now working under the supervision of the Fordingbridge library staff once a week where she adapts and generalises the skills acquired in the school's library. Interacting with a variety of library users in a safe and supportive work place is a wonderful achievement.

Parental vision and high aspirations were backed by the whole school team since her first day at the Sheiling, nearly three years ago - a wonderful journey.

## My Library

*'I started working in the library in Fordingbridge in December and I go every Tuesday afternoon to do my job.'*

*I love going to the library. I do lots of jobs when I am there. I help to put the books back on the shelves from the trolley. I have to put them in the right order.*

*I tidy up the Lego models and put the Lego away. I stamp some books and cross out the barcodes. I did sharpening pencils. I do the display in the children's section. I did some health and safety training on the computer which was a bit hard to understand and I needed some help with.*

*I love working in the library.'*





## Ramadan

Students in college's green group marked the beginning of Ramadan together. They learned more about Ramadan and its meaning. The group were lucky to have a student who was pleased to share about his faith with his peers, which they enjoyed. He did a fantastic job presenting and demonstrated wonderful confidence for which the group thanked him.

A key theme running through Ramadan is being thankful so students got creative and crafty, making some trees of gratitude. Each leaf on a tree has a note about something one of the students or staff are grateful for.



## Spring Growth

At our Carnival, we welcome new beginnings and the start of lighter days and growth. Each class received a packet of seeds to plant and care for and we love to see the progress and the love and care students give their seedlings.



## Colour and Cheer

This year at The Sheiling Ringwood, we combined our much-anticipated annual Carnival and pancake race events and it was an afternoon filled with music, colour, joy and laughter. Everyone across the Sheiling wore creative carnival costumes, some played instruments and everyone danced and raced throughout the afternoon. It was a memorable event and students expressed how much fun they had taking part... as did the staff!



## Update from the Principal

Dear Parents,

Our recent Carnival celebrations included dressing up in flamboyant colours, plenty of drumming and singing as well as some fast, competitive races with the usual impressive pancake flipping.

More recently, the school celebrated its first Sheiling Bake Off event, with our own renowned judges which included our cooks, Mr Hatcher (aka Paul Hollywood!) and Susan. The afternoon was enjoyed by all, so thank you to Banu for organising this!

With a new Fundraiser in post, you will notice more information being shared and opportunities to support the Sheiling students in a variety of ways. The Student Council took a vote on the projects they would most value being put in place and communication around this will follow.

After a lengthy and complex process, we are pleased to share that we have welcomed some staff members from across the world, via a sponsorship route opened by the government: the Skilled Worker Shortage Occupation. This means that, providing a person meets the criteria and has a successful interview, we can invite a handful of people from countries like India, Brazil and Zimbabwe, giving

our students an opportunity to experience diversity in many ways as well as supporting our aim of maintaining consistent and experienced teams in the residential houses. Recruitment continues to be a challenge, yet this route is helpful.

After more than 4 decades of service to children and young people, Susan, our Head of Residential Services, will retire at the end of May. Many of our residential parents will know Susan and I'm sure will join us in wishing her a well-deserved, happy and healthy retirement. Her deputy, Heidi, will step into the role following a successful interview process.

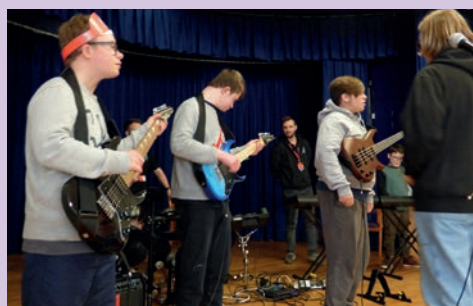
We look forward to seeing many of you at our Sports Day event on Monday 1st May. A separate letter to parents is being circulated to provide further details of this event – and we will keep our fingers crossed for good weather on that day.

Wishing you all a happy and peaceful Easter break.

Kind regards,  
*Corine*

## Rock Steady

Music is something we love at the Sheiling and a visit from Rock Steady Music School was no exception. Each school class was able to meet the Rock Steady crew and experience different instruments and make music together, with fantastic results. The Sheiling edition of 'We Will Rock You' had everybody on their feet!





## Norooz

School students learned about the celebration of Norooz (Nowruz). Norooz is the Iranian or Persian New Year celebrated around the world. It is based on the Iranian Solar Hijri calendar, on the spring equinox—on or around 21st March. It marks happy “new day” or “happy new year” in the Iranian culture.

The students were lucky to hear a little more about Iranian culture from a member of staff including how Norooz marks the first day of spring and some of the wonderful customs and traditions of this warm and welcoming celebration.

Students enjoyed discussing the seven items of Haft-seen and their meaning along with other

symbolic items and of course getting to try out some traditional Iranian delicacies.



## Happy Horse Riding

In school, classes have been taking part in horse riding therapy sessions at The Fortune Centre, a specialist centre less than 30 minutes away from our site and based in the New Forest.

Students benefit in a variety of ways and learn life skills by doing something they connect with. Horses provide the connection and they can develop the skills of students who can find a traditional classroom environment trickier. Students smile from arrival to departure and they have a fantastic time and become more confident with each session.



## Purple Power

Purple group have been working on developing their outside space. In art sessions, they have made year-round ‘flowers’ from recycled items and, in woodwork, they have made their own bug houses. It has ensured a welcoming and bright space for all to enjoy no matter what the weather!



## Our Environment

We are all very appreciative of the rich, inspiring and therapeutic woodland site that we are nestled in.

As always, we strive to be as eco-friendly as possible, engaging in many initiatives and developing new ideas to maintain and preserve this wonderful asset.

Over the past few months, led by our Facilities team, we worked towards the silver award with the Hedgehog Preservation Society. We completed targets with a huge effort from our students who took part in learning about habitats, held fundraising events and shared their knowledge with others. We were pleased when the news arrived that we are now officially a silver award site.

Our glorious outdoor environment is also perfect for our students and staff to engage in a variety of learning and hands-on activities and, this year, we added joining in celebrating Arbor Day UK to our calendar of events. Arbor Day and the importance of tree planting reflects our ethos and is a great match for our wonderful woodland site. We were delighted to be involved. Students planted their very own Arbor Day tree to take care of and all of our tree planting projects, such as sustainable borders, link in with the aims of Arbor Day.

We have recently upgraded our woodland pathways to support easy access to this delightful way of exploring and connecting with our local community.



## The Sheiling Bake Off

Students in school requested a bake off so, naturally being very fond of cakes, we agreed! School organised 'The Great Sheiling Bake Off' with classes planning and baking across an afternoon with a set time for their final pieces to be ready for our very special judges. The brief was to represent your favourite story, book or character in tasty cake form. There were prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners but all of our talented bakers received a certificate for taking part and contributing to such a fun event.





# Fundraising Update

## Electric Car - It's Arrived!

Thanks to the wonderfully generous donations of £10K from former parents of the Sheiling, Kate and Justin Thomson, and match funding by T Rowe Price resulting in an amazing total of £20K - plus funds raised through our Summer Festival 2022 - we have been able to purchase outright an electric fleet car and charging station. This will enable our students to better access the community and the opportunities for learning and leisure that this brings. Being able to convert to green transport is one of the many ways that the Sheiling works to ensure a better environmental future for us and our future generations of students.

## Sheiling Summer Festival - 24th June

We invite you to join us for this year's festival in our beautiful grounds. There will be a fantastic atmosphere with music, food, stalls and games for everyone to enjoy. Entry by donations on the gate. Summer Festival raffle tickets will be sent home soon. Please return completed stubs and money for the attention of the Finance team.

If you would like to discuss volunteering at our Summer Festival, any offers of support or help with fundraising, please contact Rachel on: **01425 482493** [rachel.staff@thesheilingringwood.co.uk](mailto:rachel.staff@thesheilingringwood.co.uk)



# Meet the Trustee

Hello, my name is David Keeton and I joined the Board of Trustees 6 years ago on retiring from full-time employment. I hold the post of Education Trustee and my area of focus is the education aspect of Sheiling School. I try to make half-termly visits to the school, spending time with the Head and Deputy Head, carrying out learning walks across the site, observing the Teaching and Learning in the classrooms and monitoring the School Development Plan with the education team - with a focus on school improvement and independent school standards.

I have 39 years' experience of working in residential Special Education, of which 25 years were spent in Leadership and Management as a Deputy Head Teacher.

Although now retired from full-time education, my work as a Trustee has enabled me to continue to support young people with SEND and share the wealth of knowledge and experience that I have gained over the years to further support and advise the Sheiling Special Education Trust. I enjoy visiting the school and spending time with the young people and staff in the classrooms and meeting them around the site; it is very encouraging to see the young people's interaction and engagement with staff and see the progress that they make. Whenever I visit, I am always amazed by the enthusiasm and dedication of the staff who work tirelessly to provide such outstanding levels of care and support, enabling the students to learn and develop their independence.



## Budding Illustrator

The adopting of a local train station at Hinton Admiral provides Sheiling students with additional opportunities. The key aims are for students to support the upkeep and maintenance of the platforms, ticket office and surrounding areas of the station, ensuring the station is welcoming to all visitors.

Students who may find accessing the station more challenging also make a positive contribution and develop their skills by creating artwork and designing displays for platform and waiting area notice boards.

A wonderful example is a student who aspires to become an illustrator. He has drawn an interpretation of his friends at work and it will go on display at the station in the coming weeks.



## Stay Connected

We would also like to remind you that the Sheiling's Discord group is run by parent members of the Parent Forum. Discord is a parent-to-parent online chat platform.

This group is to keep all people with an interest in Sheiling School and College up-to-date with our news and achievements.

'We want this to be a safe forum where we can share resources and information, have friendly chats and discuss topics of interest.'

This group is open to all parents as and when they need to use it. There is no pressure on individuals to post, answer questions or to share any information. We are a unique group of parents who have a better chance of understanding any concerns, worries and can help provide solutions.'

To connect, simply click on the link,  
<https://discord.com/invite/2G7trfWhuq>

The next Parent Forum meeting is on 24th May. Please see the information at the end of this newsletter.

## Dates for your Diary

Easter Break  
**30th March - 16th April**

Sports Day  
**Monday 1st May**

Half Term Break  
**27th May - 4th June**



Summer Term commences  
**Monday 17th April**

Coronation Bank Holiday  
**8th May**

Summer Term continues  
**Monday 5th June**

Summer Festival  
**Saturday 24th June**

## Social Media

We are keeping our Twitter (@sheilingringwd), Facebook (@sheilingringwood) and LinkedIn (The Sheiling Ringwood) pages up-to-date. So check them out to see what is happening across the campus, events, see great new pictures and even keep in touch. Our YouTube channel (The Sheiling Ringwood) is another fantastic source of information and activities or you could link with us on Instagram (thesheilingringwood).



## Enjoy the Easter Break