



Dear Parents, Carers and Readers,

As we come to the end of the Autumn term, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a really positive first term for me as the Headteacher of Shortenills and to thank you for the support you have shown our school community.

This term has seen some exciting developments. We have begun delivering our Confident Adulthood Curriculum, giving our students more opportunities to build independence, life skills and confidence for the future. Alongside this, we have introduced more focused and targeted intervention time, ensuring students receive the right support at the right moment to help them thrive both academically and emotionally.

We are also incredibly proud to have established our Post-16 provision, creating clear pathways for our older learners as they move towards adulthood. Another real highlight has been becoming an approved Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) provider, opening up valuable, practical learning opportunities and recognised accreditation for our young people. More wonderful outdoor experiences have taken place, with Shortenills running its very first Duke of Edinburgh expedition. A huge thank you to all staff involved in making this happen.

Looking ahead to the new term, our focus will be on continuing to develop and embed the Confident Adulthood Curriculum, alongside a renewed push on attendance, as being in school regularly makes such a difference to learning, wellbeing and progress.

Thank you again for your continued trust and partnership. On behalf of everyone at Shortenills, I would like to wish you and your families a very happy, restful and peaceful Christmas.

We know that the festive period is not the best time for everyone, so in the words of the Mole *'Being kind to yourself is one of the greatest kindnesses'*.

Best

Jake





Shortenills Abbey

This term has been both exciting and full of activity for everyone at Shortenills Abbey. We were thrilled to welcome our new students to Lily Class and have been so impressed by how quickly they have settled in, forming wonderful friendships and embracing school life with enthusiasm.

A special highlight for Orchid Class was completing the school's very first Duke of Edinburgh expedition – a fantastic achievement! Huge thanks to Mr Barber for making this possible and to the students for showing such resilience and determination throughout.

Iris Class has continued to navigate their final year with great focus, achieving some outstanding examination results that have helped secure their next steps. This is such an exciting time for them and while it naturally brings a few nerves, we know they will rise to the challenge.

Another milestone this term was hosting our first EBSNA coffee morning. Supporting attendance remains a key priority as we move into next term and we are so grateful for the commitment and partnership of our parents and carers in this important work.

As we head into the festive break, I would like to wish you all a restful, healthy and happy holiday. Thank you to our incredible staff, students, parents and carers for everything you do to make Shortenills Abbey such a special place. We can't wait to see what the new year and term brings.

Best wishes

Jo Hodge
Head of School
Shortenills Abbey



Starting the Year with Energy and Excitement



Our new class has brought a wonderful mix of personalities to Shortenills Abbey, filling the school with fresh energy and ideas. It has been lovely to see new friendships blossoming and students sharing their knowledge, skills and experiences. Every day feels full of possibility – no two days are ever the same!

In Lily Class, creativity has been in full flow as students explored a variety of art materials and techniques. From animal-inspired masterpieces to spooky Hallowe'en designs, their imagination has truly shone through!

We have also been on a culinary adventure in the kitchen, cooking dishes from around the world as part of our HPQ research projects. So far, we have sampled Bully Beef, Chicken Tinola and Ramen each dish bringing it's own story and flavour.

Outdoor Learning has taken us beyond the classroom and into nature. Students have planted trees donated by The Woodland Trust, helping to create a future shady spot where people can relax and enjoy the outdoors... in about 20 years' time! It's a small act today that will make a big difference for generations to come.



Expeditions, exams and everything in between

It has been a very exciting start to KS4 for Orchid Class where students have been preparing for examinations in Entry Level and Functional Skills qualifications in both English and Maths. We have been really impressed with the determination shown by students and the success surely followed with some excellent results!

Some of our students have been working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award where they have been learning to canoe ahead of their weekend expedition with the young people from Shortenills Forest too. Students are now working towards their hours for the Volunteer, Skill and Physical elements of the award.

In English, we have been studying the musical *"Blood Brothers"* whilst learning key analytical skills, including advancing their creative writing, how to *"be more butterfly"* and PETAZL paragraphs for essay writing. We will next be studying *"A Christmas Carol"* so we absolutely will be watching *"A Muppet's Christmas Carol"* before the holidays begin!



In Maths, students have been working towards geometry, especially their use of a pair of compasses, ruler and protractor to draw angles accurately and even turning a pentagon into the perfect egg (with thanks to Maths-Legend Johnny Ball)!

We have finished our first unit towards BTEC Science *"Biology and Our Environment"* and 2 units towards BTEC PSHE *"Beliefs and Values"* and *"Sex and Relationships"*.

Students are showing some amazing talents in Art lessons where they are learning and practising a range of different methods, inspired by some incredible artists, including Andy Warhol and Donald Van Schilt.

We have been really impressed with the work ethic of this class, the listening skills and the willingness to go above and beyond in their work. We can expect some excellent and continued progress from Year 10s and we are already so proud of what they are achieving, both individually and together!

Well done, Team; have a well-deserved and restful winter break!



Celebrating Hard Work and Outstanding Achievements

This term has been action-packed, highly productive and full of exciting achievements. We are incredibly proud of how hard the class has worked and of the many qualifications they have gained.

Half of the class have successfully completed their final cooking assessments, producing sumptuous two-course meals that showcased both skill and creativity. In addition, every single member of Iris Class has passed their Functional Skills English reading exam at Level 2 – the highest level. These accomplishments are a real testament to the growing maturity and independence that the class continues to display.

We have also been impressed by the way students have taken ownership of their future, actively researching their post-16 rights and options. This proactive approach reflects their readiness for the next stage of their journey.

Finally, we were delighted to welcome Mrs Kiss into our Art lessons this term. Under her guidance, students have focused on developing and completing their final pieces and the results look absolutely amazing!

you are
AMAZING



Congratulations to Mr Wright: Championing Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are delighted to share our congratulations to Mr Wright for successfully completing his Mental Health First Aid training. This certified qualification is a fantastic achievement and reflects his genuine commitment to creating a safe, supportive and caring environment within our school community.



The knowledge, skills and practical strategies gained through this training will be invaluable in promoting wellbeing and offering help when it's needed most. We truly appreciate Mr Wright's dedication and willingness to take on such an important role and we are confident that his contribution will make a positive and lasting difference for everyone at Shortenills Abbey.



We hope this festive
season brings you joy,
peace,
and time to relax with
loved ones.

Wishing you a very Merry
Christmas and a Happy
New Year

With love from everyone at
Shortenills Abbey



[Click here for Calendar and Term Dates](#)



[Click here for Information for Parents & Carers on our school website](#)



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