



SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER
SAST
SHERBORNE AREA SCHOOLS' TRUST

Sturminster Newton High School



SCHOOL PROSPECTUS

Respectful | Responsible | Resilient

WELCOME TO STURMINSTER NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL



Dear Parents, Carers, and Prospective Students,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the prospectus for Sturminster Newton High School.

We are a values-driven school rooted in the heart of our beautiful local community. Serving the town of Sturminster Newton and its surrounding villages, we take immense pride in the strong relationships we build with families, local organisations, and the wider community. We believe that education is a shared journey — one that thrives through collaboration, trust, and mutual support. As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child, and we are proud to be part of that village.

Our school offers the best of both worlds: the warmth and personal attention of a smaller setting, combined with high expectations for academic achievement and personal development. In 2025, we celebrated some of our strongest ever GCSE results that showcased our outcomes as some of the best in Dorset - a reflection of our students' hard work, our staff's dedication, and the strength of our school culture.

At Sturminster Newton, we are committed to nurturing the whole child. Our broad and balanced curriculum is designed to inspire curiosity, build resilience, and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities ahead. We foster a love of learning in an environment where every student is known, supported, and encouraged to flourish.

We hope this prospectus gives you a clear sense of what makes our school special. If you would like to visit us during the school day, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We would be delighted to welcome you, show you around, and answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school.

With warm regards
Mr Michael Motteram, Head of School



SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER



Part of a Flourishing Trust

Sturminster Newton High School is proud to be part of the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust (SAST) — a collaborative family of 18 schools across Dorset and South Somerset. This partnership strengthens our curriculum, enhances staff development, and opens up new opportunities for our students.

SAST's vision — Flourishing Children, Flourishing Schools, Flourishing Communities — aligns closely with our own values. It reflects our commitment to high standards, inclusive education, and strong community ties. Working alongside schools such as The Gryphon and Shaftesbury, we share expertise and resources to ensure every child thrives.



Our School's Vision

At Sturminster Newton High School, our vision is simple yet powerful: we believe deeply that ***it takes a village to raise a child***. This principle is at the heart of our approach: children flourish when schools, families, and the wider community work together with shared purpose and care. This collaborative spirit strengthens our ambition, deepens belonging, and enriches our connection to the community we proudly serve.

We are ***ambitious*** — We set high expectations and nurture the potential of every student, no matter their starting point. With the right support and challenge, every child can succeed and thrive.

We foster a deep sense of ***belonging*** — creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where every student feels valued, seen, and heard. Our school is a place where individuality is celebrated and diversity is embraced.

We are proud to know our ***community*** — rooted in the beautiful town of Sturminster Newton and its surrounding areas, we work in close partnership with families, local organisations, and community groups. We believe in a collaborative approach to education, inspired by the concept that it takes a village to raise a child.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Sturminster Newton High School is a co-educational community comprehensive school for students aged 11- 19. The school currently has approximately 650 students of whom 100 attend the Sixth Form. The Sixth Form works in partnership with Shaftesbury School.

We work closely with and accept students from the Sturminster Newton network of primary schools which includes Child Okeford, Shillingstone, William Barnes, Stalbridge and Hazelbury Bryan. We also accept students from other schools and after admissions choices have been made, we include these students in our transition activities. The planned admission number (PAN) for the school is 120 for each academic year and we operate the Dorset Admissions Policy.

Our School Values

Our core values of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience are at the heart of everything we do. We instil these values in our students, helping them to become confident, responsible members of our community.

By embedding these values into our daily practices, we aim to nurture well-rounded individuals who are prepared to make a positive impact in the world

Respectful

Respect is at the heart of our school; we promote a culture of mutual respect by encouraging students to use kind and polite words, even in challenging situations, and by celebrating diverse perspectives and backgrounds.

Responsible

We believe that fostering a sense of **responsibility** in our students helps them become accountable for their actions and duties, encouraging them to take ownership of their learning and contribute positively to our community.

Resilient

Resilience is important, as we teach our students to persevere through difficulties and view challenges as opportunities for growth, be that during exams, challenging subject content or in social situations.

OUR SCHOOL HOUSE SYSTEM

Barnes

At Sturminster Newton High School, our vibrant house system is at the heart of our community, fostering a sense of belonging, teamwork, and healthy competition among students. Students are allocated to a tutor group when they join our school, and each tutor group represents one of our four houses.

Hardy

The four houses — Barnes, Hardy, Raleigh, and Thornhill— each represent unique values and traditions that contribute to the holistic development of our students.

Barnes House: Celebrating the legacy of author and poet William Barnes, this house stands for academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, and a passion for learning.

Hardy House: Named after the renowned author Thomas Hardy, this house embodies creativity, resilience, and a love for literature and the arts.

Raleigh House: Honouring the explorer Sir Walter Raleigh, this house encourages adventure, leadership, and a spirit of discovery.

Thornhill House: Inspired by the historical artist Sir James Thornhill, this house promotes artistic expression, innovation, and a commitment to cultural enrichment.

Raleigh

Thornhill

Throughout the year, students earn points for their houses through academic achievements, sports, extracurricular activities, and community activities. Regular house competitions and events provide opportunities for students to showcase their talents, work collaboratively, and build lasting friendships.

The house system not only enhances school spirit but also prepares our students to be well-rounded individuals ready to face the challenges of the future.



POST 16 EDUCATION - SIXTH FORM

Every student has a place at our school following their Key Stage 4 education.

Our Sixth Form provides excellent teaching and achieves consistently strong results. Our students enjoy individual support and guidance from their tutors in a positive, successful and friendly environment. We are small enough to know all our students well and this enables us to support them throughout their time in the Sixth Form and to provide them with expert advice when making their university and careers choices.

We offer a broad range of courses including over 24 A levels and 4 BTEC Courses. All students have a minimum of 30 hours work experience in Year 12. We also offer a transition year for all students who did not manage to gain the entry requirements for level 3 studies.



This year includes support for English and Maths retakes, additional qualifications, personal development, and mentoring to support students accessing their next steps.

Sturminster Newton has a long standing and successful partnership with Shaftesbury School which provides a greater breadth of subject choices for our sixth form. All transport between sites is provided, and students gain the opportunity to access the best of both schools, make new friends, while having the security of continuing their time in a school that knows them well.

CURRICULUM

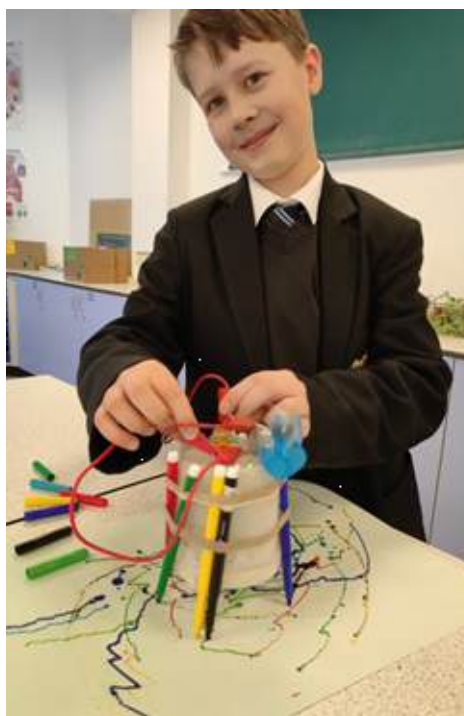
Our curriculum is designed to inspire a love of learning, foster intellectual curiosity, and prepare students for the challenges of the future. The most important resource of the school is the teaching staff. We are blessed to have well qualified and experienced staff who work in specialist teams throughout the school. They are very ably assisted by support staff including a highly experienced and effective team of Teaching Assistants and Technicians.

Lessons are delivered using a range approaches to improve the learning and achievement for each individual, but with techniques and expertise underpinned by evidence-informed educational pedagogy.

In every subject, attention is given to the development of good written and spoken communication skills with a focus on literacy across the whole school using the 'Reading to Succeed' Scheme.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9) - During Key Stage 3, students experience a broad and balanced curriculum that lays the foundation for future learning. Our aim is to develop well-rounded individuals with a strong academic base and a wide range of skills.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11) - At Key Stage 4, students have the opportunity to tailor their education to their interests and career aspirations while continuing to study core subjects.



LEARNING SUPPORT

At Sturminster Newton High School, we take pride in supporting the individual needs of our students and offer a carefully planned and personalised approach. We extend a broad and comprehensive range of support that responds to social and emotional difficulties as well as academic learning needs.

Our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for students based upon the four broad areas of need identified by the Department for Education:

Communication and interaction, for example, autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties. Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, epilepsy

High quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEND. This will be differentiated for individual pupils.



PASTORAL SUPPORT

The school's guidance and welfare system is divided into Year groups 7-11, with a dedicated Head of Key Stage providing exceptional pastoral care under the direction of the Assistant Headteacher. The Sixth Form is under the direction of the Head of Sixth Form.

Each year group has its own team of Form Tutors who, together with the Head of Key Stage, monitor the academic and pastoral progress of students. They provide guidance and advice through the students' time at school. Upon entry into the school all students are organised into one of four houses; Barnes, Hardy, Raleigh and Thornhill. These groups are arranged to include a broad social and academic mix. Tutors have a special responsibility for their tutor group, monitoring in detail each individual's progress and behaviour. They are the first people to contact should Parents/Carers have any concerns. Our experience is that students within a tutor group develop a special relationship with each other, their Tutor and Head of Year as they move up through the school.



ENRICHMENT AND EXTRA CURRICULAR



To widen the experience of our students and support our pastoral and academic curriculum, we organise a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and enrichment. We hope that such activities encourage students to work as teams, improve individual performance and allow them to broaden their horizons.

Examples include:

- Visits abroad
- Work experience
- Theatre visits
- Field study trips
- Skiing
- Visits to major art galleries
- Dance, Drama and Music workshops
- Expeditions: distance walking, the Ten Tors Challenge and Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Visits to cities of national importance e.g. London, Bristol



Sports and Representative Games

Sport plays an important part in school life. Students can take part in a wide variety of sports, either in lunchtime practices and clubs, or by representing the school in fixtures against other local schools. Inter-house Sport Competitions take place throughout the year and there is a Sports Day at the end of the Summer Term. The school has had successful teams and individual performers in North Dorset, County and National competitions. The sports delivered include rugby, football, netball, athletics, softball, fitness, gymnastics, dance, basketball, badminton, handball, rounders, cricket and tennis/pickleball.



Creative and Expressive Arts

The school is proud of its artistic, dramatic and musical achievements. Peripatetic teachers are available to provide music lessons to students in a wide range of instruments such as percussion, keyboard and guitar.

We encourage performance in all forms and hold an annual Music Concert to showcase talent. The school also has a long tradition of drama productions. These embrace a significant proportion of students and have attracted large and appreciative audiences.

Student Leadership - Developing Individuals

Students at Sturminster Newton High School are actively encouraged to develop their leadership skills and are given responsibilities so that they learn to lead. Year 11 students can be selected to become prefects, supporting staff duty teams, alongside Sixth Form students who can take on the role of Head Student. Student Ambassadors form the Student Leadership Team and students in all year groups have the opportunity to become members of the student council if they choose. Students have a weekly tutor session focussed on Personal Development which includes looking at Careers, understanding the wider world and developing their aspirations through our Aspire Personal Development tracking system.

Rewards for students who are working hard in school are an essential ingredient in continuing to boost a student's self-esteem and motivation. Every lesson student's work hard they are recognised with Achievement Points that build toward a variety of different rewards including Bronze, Silver, Gold achievement badges and a variety of activities such as film and popcorn afternoons, non-school uniform treats and trips. Attendance, behaviour, attitude to learning and progress are all factored into the reward system ensuring we are constantly praising students who are meeting our values of respect, responsibility and resilience.

Serving our Community

We contribute to, and benefit from, close links with the community which we serve, and make every attempt to get involved in local opportunities. Students can expect to work in the community and be offered opportunities to link with projects and initiatives including the local Rotary and Lions Club, commerce, industry and events including the local Cheese Festival.

We firmly believe that it is in the giving that we receive, and accordingly, students get involved in supporting and fund raising for a variety of charitable causes. In recent years this has included the 'Rotary Christmas Shoe Boxes Appeal', Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, MS, Children in Need, Help for Heroes, Cancer Research and Sport Relief. Students raise funds for their chosen charity, devising their own fund raising strategies, led by the student council.



PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Education is most effective when parents and school work closely together. At Sturminster we value this important partnership, and parents are kept informed on a regular basis via our weekly Head of School bulletin, reports and our programme of Parents Evenings where student progress is discussed.

We are keen to continue developing stronger links and through the 'Arbor Parent App' Parents/Carers are able to track their child's progress on a daily basis using this app. We also welcome parent feedback via their child's tutor or Head of Year. We aim to run a series of Parent Forums each year, alongside regular feedback forms to inform our school's direction moving forward.

At the start of each academic year, every student is issued with a Home-School Planner which helps monitor homework, aids day to day organisation and facilitates contact between school and home. The Planner must be taken to each lesson and homework must be recorded. Parents and tutors are invited to comment in it on a daily or weekly basis. Parents are asked to look at the Planner and sign it at the end of each week.





Conduct

Everyone will act with courtesy and consideration for others at all times, as this is the guiding principle of the School's Climate for Learning Policy.

All students recognise the importance that we place upon a calm and friendly environment where everyone can learn and work to achieve their maximum potential.

Homework

The school believes that homework is central to the learning process, aiding further study and helping raise achievement. Homework improves students' study skills, independence in learning and consolidates and extends the work covered in the classroom.

Homework may take a variety of forms and reflects the differences between subjects and the topics being studied at any one time.



Pupil Premium

Parents who are eligible to claim for free school meals are encouraged to do so. The eligible students then trigger an additional payment to the school known as Pupil Premium. This funding is used flexibly to support students throughout their school career subsidising visits and school uniform and funding specific activities to support learning.

For more information about the School's Pupil Premium Strategy, please refer to our school website



UNIFORM AND TRANSITION

At Sturminster students in Years 7 to 11 are required to wear the distinctive school uniform which, we believe, helps students settle quickly into their new school and feel that they belong.

In the Autumn and Spring Terms this includes the school blazer, shirt and tie. In the Summer Term the shirt and tie are replaced by the school's own blue polo shirt. Part of the school rules is to wear the complete school uniform. More information can be found in the Essential Information for Parents and Students booklet (available on our website) and/or the Students' Planner .



Transition

There are strong links with our pyramid of primary schools with an ongoing programme of joint activities. As part of our annual Community Open Day parents and children in Years 5 and 6 are invited to view the school and meet staff and students. In the summer term, a senior team leader, the Head of Year 7 and SEND/Safeguarding specialist, visit every primary school to meet the children and their teachers to discuss individual issues.

Each July we have an induction day for Year 6 students. They follow a programme of lessons and activities, have lunch in the dining room and experience travelling on school transport. This all helps students to settle easily in September.

Students with additional needs are offered additional transition sessions in the afternoons of the final half term. They are able to meet all of the key staff in the Hub and revisit key parts of the school so that they feel confident to make the transition to secondary school.

There are also cross-curricular projects organised across the Pyramid of primary schools which help promote a smooth transition between Year 6 and Year 7.



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Published September 2025

