



THE SWANNAGE SCHOOL



Exceptional learning in a world-class location

A WARM WELCOME

I am delighted to introduce you to The Swanage School. We are a small school, with a clear vision for every child to achieve their very best potential.

I am immensely proud of our achievements since our first students donned their new uniforms and joined us back in 2013, and to be headteacher of this fantastic school. I am lucky to lead a team of dynamic, dedicated staff who believe wholeheartedly in providing the best possible education and experience for the children in our charge.

We encourage our students, we challenge them, we inspire them. We care about their troubles, we celebrate with them their achievements, and we teach them exceptionally well. We want to expand their horizons, give them opportunities, make them fearless and know that when they leave us we have not only given them a great academic education, but also helped to foster their growth into well-rounded young adults and equipped them with the skills and qualifications they need to take the next step towards achieving their dreams.

Our school motto is 'we try, we fail, we learn, we succeed'. Of course, we write this here in our prospectus and on our website, but it's more than words, we live it too. It's part of what we call 'The Swanage School Way'. We encourage our students to be confident, resilient and reflective. As a school, as staff, we don't always get things right first time, but we always strive to put things right and that's what we teach our students too. We have a strong school ethos of kindness and respect, a restorative approach to behaviour and we know each student well, as an individual.

When our students leave us we want them to have fond memories, great results and an aspirational mindset. Parents are very much part of the mix and if you and your child choose The Swanage School to be part of your lives we look forward to getting to know you over the coming years.

With my very best wishes,

Jenny Maraspin

Headteacher



HEADTEACHER JENNY MARASPIN



As students and staff we all sign up to...

THE SWANAGE SCHOOL WAY

We

- Respect each other and treat others as we would like to be treated
- Strive for academic excellence
- Help members of the wider community
- Take pride in our appearance
- Do the best we can

We try, we fail, we learn, we succeed



SMALL SCHOOL: BIG IMPACT

The image shows two young women in school uniforms (white shirts and blue ties) wearing large black headphones. They are focused on a computer keyboard, with one student's hand on the keys and the other's hand near a mouse. The background is a blurred purple wall, suggesting a school environment. The overall scene conveys a sense of modern education and individual attention.

The Swanage School has around 340 pupils. Many secondary schools admit more than that each year. Being small is key to our vision and ethos for it means that our teachers really do know each child as an individual.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Being small means not only do staff know students well, but that students know each other well too. Each student has more of a voice, and is more likely to be able to join sports teams, be a student leader or represent the school in academic and creative opportunities. Our students can take on responsibility and feel that they make a difference.

A small school can adapt quickly to the needs of its students and the new requirements and innovations in education, exemplifying the idea that modern careers are no longer about 'jobs for life' but about being independent, resourceful and flexible.

Of course, it's also far less daunting to join 'big school' if the school isn't big. Our students progress smoothly from primary to secondary and settle quickly, ready to engage with learning.



THE ADVANTAGES OF A SMALL SCHOOL

- The whole school can come together in the main hall for assemblies, celebrations and meals
- Students support and encourage each other across the year groups and through friendly competition
- Staff easily exchange information and concerns with each other and act upon them
- Teachers work together across subject boundaries, e.g., improving literacy in science or exploring maths in geography lessons
- The open-plan design of our buildings ensure safety and inspire confidence



CREWS



We have small tutor groups known as 'crews' which aim to develop character, ambition, productivity and community engagement - complementing students' academic studies.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

A relentless focus on engaging and meaningful learning so that every child achieves their best potential.

DEDICATED TEACHERS

We handpick staff who demonstrate outstanding teaching, who are inspiring and who can help students make exceptional progress. Our staff are dedicated to the innovative education approaches we have developed and work as a team, everyone pulling in the same direction.

We are never complacent and continually review everything we do, to ensure we offer quality teaching, develop our students as excellent learners, and meet the changing needs of every child.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We set high expectations for all our students, providing an authentic and rewarding education for all. We expect them to engage, to produce high quality work, and to be able to go on to A-levels and university if they so wish. Staff are committed to continuing professional development, and parents are expected to support their child and attend our Celebration of Learning events.

AN ACADEMICALLY RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

We follow the National Curriculum, although as an academy have freedom to innovate. Delivery of the curriculum in each subject and between subjects has been well thought through. We aim to immerse our students in learning, empowering them as active agents in their own education.

EQUIPPED FOR LEARNING

Learning is enhanced by our purpose-built classrooms, labs, workshop, sports facilities and performance spaces. Classrooms have modern technology to aid delivery of lessons, complemented by our IT suites. We give each new student a Chromebook of their own to keep throughout their studies to enhance learning both in the classroom and at home.

Over 95% of respondents in a recent parent survey said we have high academic standards and that their child makes good progress.

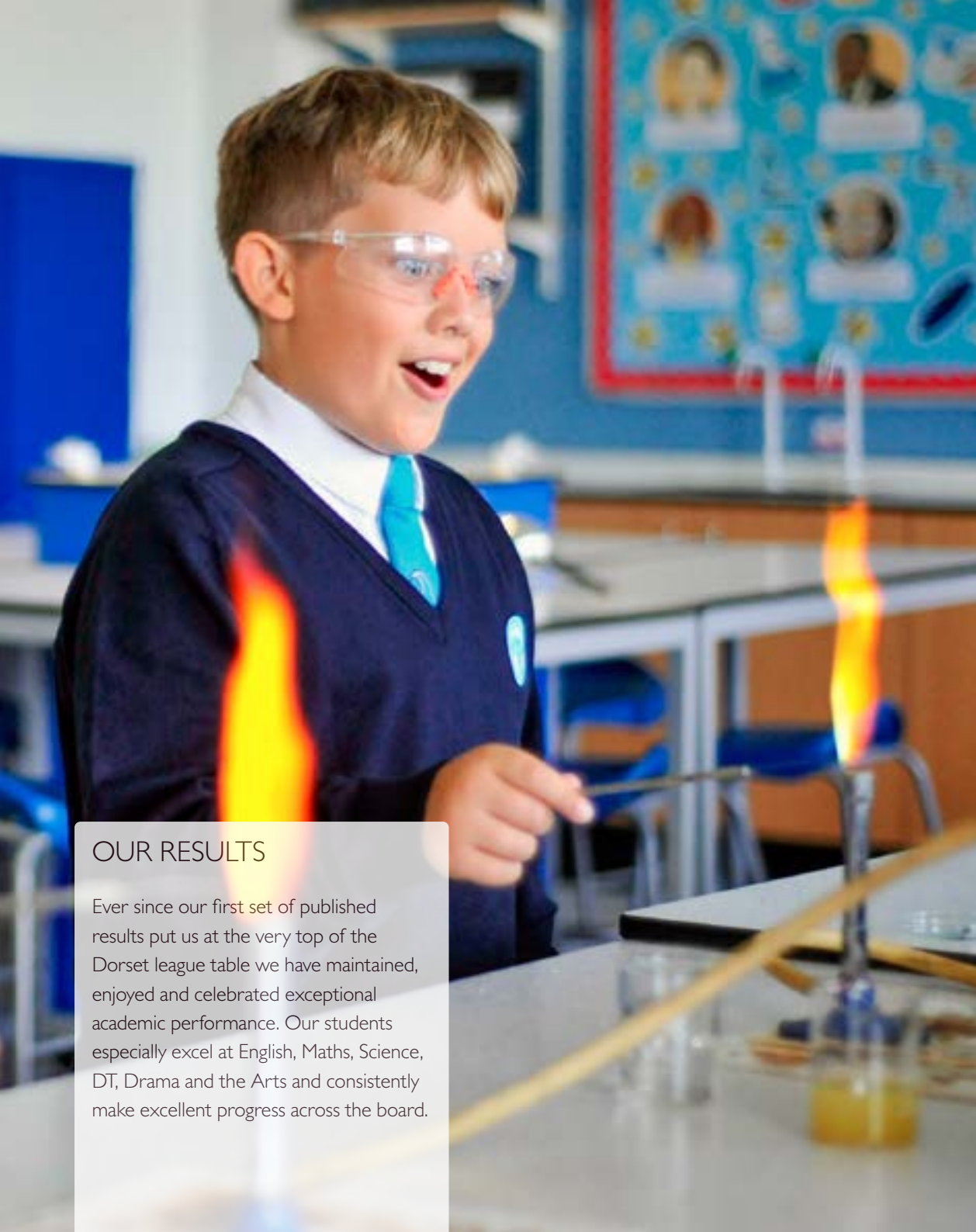
98% of respondents would recommend The Swanage School to other parents.

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Teaching staff have high expectations for their students and they communicate this effectively with parents. Success is celebrated and individuals are valued. The human sized scale of the school allows for each student to be known to all staff.

Parent survey respondent

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OUR RESULTS

Ever since our first set of published results put us at the very top of the Dorset league table we have maintained, enjoyed and celebrated exceptional academic performance. Our students especially excel at English, Maths, Science, DT, Drama and the Arts and consistently make excellent progress across the board.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN KEY STAGE 3

Project-based learning offers a deep, active learning experience anchored to real-life contexts and problems, locally and globally. Through projects, students explore, research and inquire across multiple subjects and produce meaningful, quality work. Project work is showcased to peers, parents and to the wider community, through exhibitions, displays and products. In Key Stage 3 our humanities subjects - History, Geography and PRE (Philosophy, Religion & Ethics) - are taught this way, and projects integrate with other subjects too, enriching the curriculum. The humanities are developed as separate subjects in Years 9 and above as students work towards their GCSEs.

GCSE STUDIES

Throughout Key Stage 4, students work hard towards their GCSEs, having made well informed option choices. We challenge students to achieve their very best grades, put in place individually tailored support if needed, and ensure they leave us with a clear path ahead.

In short, we are determined that every child will be encouraged and supported to reach their very best academic potential and to know that we are proud of their achievements, which we celebrate with them.

We teach students to be active and reflective learners, to have a voice, to inquire, to create and to make a difference.

SERIOUSLY HAPPY: ENJOYING LEARNING

100% of parent survey respondents said their child is well looked after at The Swanage School.



The school cares about their pupils and this shows. The Swanage School is an excellent school and we are very happy to be part of it. I really see The Swanage School going above and beyond to offer more than just an 'education' to their pupils.

Parent survey respondent



ENGAGED STUDENTS

The children are enthused by professional, friendly and knowledgeable staff and are drawn into learning through interesting lessons and projects taught in school and beyond. Swanage School students know that they are important, valued and accepted. We support and encourage them to be confident, accomplished and articulate with a strong sense of who they are. It's all part of The Swanage School Way.

GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Visitors to the school often comment on how well our students behave. Incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are very rare and, when they do occur, are dealt with quickly. We take a restorative approach, meaning that we encourage reflection and prioritise making amends.

SUPPORTIVE ATMOSPHERE

Genuine relationships are key at The Swanage School. We meet regularly to celebrate successes and to help each other. Our staff meet frequently to discuss how each child is doing and what can be improved. Crew Leaders have strong relationships with the children and work with parents and carers to discuss progress and any concerns.

No child 'falls through the net.'

OPEN TO ALL

We are a fully comprehensive school and attract students who would otherwise attend grammar school as well as students who have found school difficult. We have a clear vision for every child to achieve their very best potential. We set high expectations and our curriculum offers opportunities for all

students to be challenged. More able students will take GCSEs in Further Maths and separate sciences, while other students might need extra help in numeracy and literacy to help them achieve a good pass in Maths and English.

A HOME OF LEARNING

Our flexible spaces mirror our innovative approach to teaching. One wing of the school contains maths, science, and design technology; the other has English, languages and humanities. Next to the central hall (the 'Atrium') are music rooms and the studio, a multi-functional space for drama and creative media, complete with green screen and neighbouring control room, editing suite and podcast studio. Our kitchen, which offers freshly prepared meals, sits alongside the Atrium which is a multi-purpose space used for assemblies, performances, meeting and eating.



SPORT: LEADING HEALTHY, ACTIVE LIVES



A VARIED SPORTS CURRICULUM

In PE lessons, students will not only engage in traditional school sports, but also take part in water-sports, making the most of our fantastic coastal location. Athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, football, gymnastics, handball, netball, rugby, softball and table-tennis are offered alongside kayaking, paddle-boarding and raft-building.

TAILORED CURRICULUM

If students take PE as a GCSE we will support them, where we can, to pursue their preferred individual sport even where we do not offer it ourselves. We have had students specialise in golf, skiing and equestrian skills.

MODERN FACILITIES

We have an impressive full-size sports hall, sports pitches and an all-weather 'astro' court.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR SPORTS SESSIONS

There are plenty of opportunities to play sport on an extra-curricular basis too, at after-school sports clubs or by representing the school at fixtures.





ALL THE WORLD'S A CLASSROOM

Learning doesn't just happen in school, it lasts a lifetime if people are engaged in the world around them. We take our students out of the classroom whenever possible to put lessons in context and to let them experience the evidence for themselves.

Every year some 200,000 pupils from across the UK visit the area to spend a week studying Purbeck's natural and historical treasures. We have these wonderful resources on our doorstep and make sure our students benefit from them.

We also take students on educational and inspirational visits around the UK and abroad. These have included art trips to London and Paris, residential maths courses at Exeter and Portsmouth universities, and field studies in Iceland and Spain.

“ ...some amazing memories and experiences that, personally, I'll remember forever and still talk about to this day. The trips we went on were amazing and when mentioned to people in other schools, they would just look at you in total disbelief. Past student ”



We run dozens of trips every year!

CHALLENGE DAYS

These are days to inspire and educate both students and staff, where the whole school goes off-timetable. They vary depending on current topics and have included beach-based team-building and problem-solving activities, and in-depth maths investigations. Our most recent Challenge Days were themed around 'Healthy Body', 'Healthy Mind' and 'Healthy Planet'.

CHALLENGE WEEK

Challenge Week is held in the last week of term and allows students to explore topics and activities in greater depth, and experience things they might not otherwise do. Each year a range of options is offered, including residential trips in the UK and abroad, as well as activities based locally.

Challenge Week trips have included surf camps, learning to sail, trekking, West End shows, art explorations, indoor and outdoor climbing, adventures on the Jurassic Coast and sightseeing visits.

“ *The Challenge Days and Challenge Week are amazing. They [students] learn new skills, make new friends and have a lot of fun. It pushes them to try things they normally wouldn't do. It gives them confidence.* ”

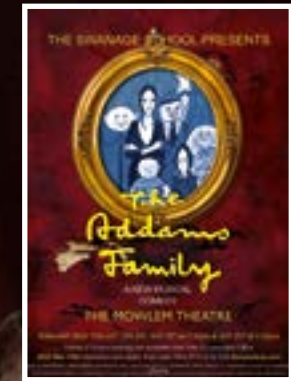
Parent survey respondent

If you have seen one of our annual shows at The Mowlem Theatre, you will know we have a strong Performing Arts department!

Our shows have become a staple of the town calendar and a huge number of students take part each year, showcasing incredible talent, working together and gaining immeasurable confidence.

We also take part in 'National Connections', a nationwide competition run by the National Theatre in London.





“Like a West End show!”

AFTER SCHOOL IS FOR CLUBS

We run a wide variety of free after-school clubs, organised by our staff and fantastic local volunteers. Whether it's badminton or basketball, choir or catering, Pokémon or podcasting, there's something for everyone. And if an interest isn't catered for, students are helped to set up their own clubs.

Our approach to extracurricular activities is increasingly to run clubs to mirror real-world contexts. The Swanage School Race Team is a good example. To gain a place on the team, students complete online skills training and make an application. They are then supported to run every aspect themselves - becoming technical engineers, logistical experts and marketing gurus.



Our Robotics Team has started competing in FIRST Tech Challenge UK. The mission of FIRST Tech is to use STEM initiatives to empower young people to explore, challenge and grow into the innovators of the future.

The Race Team compete in the Greenpower IET Formula 24 Championship.

EMPLOYMENT THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

Providing opportunities for students to develop 'real-life' skills and competencies that are valued by employers is central to the way we do things. Teamwork, communication, interpersonal skills, self-motivation, digital literacy, and the ability to problem-solve - these are what employers want young people to demonstrate. We build them into delivery of the curriculum and the way we run activities and extracurricular clubs.

In Year 9, for instance, we increasingly work on preparing and equipping students: supporting them to make the right GCSE choices and equipping them with skills, competencies and supplementary qualifications needed for their next steps and in the workplace. We facilitate students to complete the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award, and to take certificates in practical skills such as food hygiene, health & safety, first aid and internet safety.

Throughout their time at The Swanage School, students gain experience of planning projects and making presentations, by being creative, maximising productivity and using digital technology.

Students are given opportunities to make visits to higher and further education providers and we give assemblies and invite guest speakers to inspire students and raise career aspirations.



PART OF THE COMMUNITY

A bonus of having a school in town is that the community benefits from the volunteering efforts of our students, whether that's organising a beach clean, raising money for a defibrillator, or working with artists and other local schools to create permanent artworks. We are delighted to invite elderly residents to join us for a Christmas tea-party. We were proud to manufacture thousands of protective face-shields for local key workers and to provide meals for elderly and vulnerable members of the community during the pandemic lockdowns.

The governance of the school is overseen by a community cooperative trust that aims to make Swanage a vibrant and sustainable town where students are encouraged to become responsible and active citizens.

Where relationships are at the heart of the school, and the school is at the heart of the community.



NEXT STEPS

Students make excellent progress at The Swanage School enabling them to go on to further and higher education and the career of their choice.

Former students have gone on to sixth form at Purbeck, Lytchett Minster, Parkstone and Poole Grammar, Thomas Hardy, Bournemouth and Poole College, Weymouth College, Kingston Maurward and Brockenhurst College, studying everything from A levels to courses in marine engineering and outdoor pursuits, while others have taken up apprenticeships.

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This school is amazing. Other schools should look to this school for inspiration.

Parent survey respondent

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Apply now! Admissions close 31 October

- Call the Dorset Council School Admissions Team on 01305 221060
- Visit www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-place



If you have any questions, please call the school on 01929 500599 or email office@theswanageschool.co.uk

For all the latest news visit www.theswanageschool.co.uk or follow us on Facebook or Instagram.