



December 2024

Dear families,

It has been an absolute pleasure and privilege to take up the role of Head of School at The Castle School this month. The school has been as busy as ever this half term, with our values of achieve, belong and participate at the heart of all that we do.

We are exceptionally proud to have received confirmation that the Leavers 2024 outcomes placed The Castle School as the highest school in Somerset for Progress 8 with a value of +0.6, the best the school has ever achieved. It was a pleasure to welcome back our Year 11s to celebrate their successes at their Presentation Evening in November.

The House system at The Castle School has been in place since the school opened in the 1960s. We often talk about the importance of family and legacy in our values, so it's been fantastic to see those in action this term with an array of House competitions and events that demonstrate our students' commitment to participation. Nearly two-thirds of our students are completing on average one enrichment activity per week, which is a record-breaking achievement!

It's been a very busy few weeks for House sport, with competitions happening for each year group in hockey, rugby and badminton. These events take place during lunch and draw an encouraging crowd, supporting their House teams. It has been a joy to see older students supporting by coaching and giving tactical advice to younger students, all in a competitive yet friendly environment.

As part of The Castle Challenge, we have enjoyed seeing our Year 9 students taking part in volunteering, supporting the local community in various ways. This term, we have had students making cookies and then delivering them to Musgrove Park Hospital as a gift to the key workers, as well as students completing litter picks in Longrun Meadow and visiting a local primary school to read with younger children. All of this active community work strengthens our local relationships and also teaches students the value and importance of working together.

Our Year 10 students have begun their House Enterprise project planning, aiming to raise money for charity, encouraging creativity and development of entrepreneurial skills. We look forward to seeing their plans develop further in the Spring term.

The annual House Dance Competition was a brilliant success, with guests treated to 'A Night At The West End', showcasing outstanding performances achieved through hours of commitment and hard work.

We have ended our term on a high with The Castle School Musician evening, as well as our vibrant Christmas Concert. In keeping with tradition, we will enjoy the Variety Show on the final day. Huge congratulations and thanks to everyone who participates.

Finally, I would like to thank all families for their responses to the Trust Parent and Carer Survey, which were both hugely positive about the school, as well as giving us plenty of feedback to consider and review about our next steps as a school. I look forward to writing to you in January with more specific feedback, ideas and developing our connections further.

Wishing our students, families and friends of The Castle School a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you all enjoy a well-deserved rest over the festive period. Students will be dismissed from school on Friday 20th December at 2pm and we look forward to welcoming back all staff and students on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Wordsworth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr J Wordsworth  
**Head of School**  
**The Castle School**